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THE GREAT DYNAMITE FACTORY AT ARDEER.

By H. J. W. Dam.

THE MAKING AND HANDLING OF HIGH EXPLOSIVES.—LIFE AND MANNERS OF THE WORKMEN.—PRECAUTIONS AGAINST ACCIDENTS.—THE SMALL NUMBER OF CASUALTIES.

THE great dynamite factory at Ardeer in Scotland, the largest of its kind, is one of the most picturesque places in the world. Considering the unique and dramatic conditions that prevail among its workers, the neglect of Ardeer hitherto by novelists and dramatists is surprising. This may be due, however, to the fact that it is exceedingly difficult for a stranger to obtain access to the factory, while, once inside, the surroundings are rather trying to sensitive nerves. For six hours a day and two days in succession your life depends, at every moment, upon a thermometer.

Great is the thermometer at Ardeer! Nitroglycerin, a teaspoonful of which would blow you to fragments, surrounds you in hundreds and thousands of gallons. It is making itself in huge tanks, gurgling merrily along open leaden gutters, falling ten feet in brown waterfalls, so to speak, into tanks of soda solution, and bubbling so furiously in other cylinders, through the in-rush of cold air from below, that it seems to be boiling. It is being drawn off from large porcelain taps like ale, poured into boxes, and rattled along tramways. In the form of dynamite, it is being rubbed with great force through brass sieves, jammed into cartridges, and flung into boxes; and in the form of blasting gelatin, it is being torn by metal rods, forced through sausage machines, and cut, wrapped, and tossed into hoppers—all these processes proceeding as rapidly as if it were ordinary olive-oil instead of the deadliest explosive known to man.

All around you are big cotton mills and storehouses as full of fleecy, white cotton as ordinary cotton mills and storehouses, but every pinch of the cotton, still white and fleecy, has been nitrated into gun-cotton, and would suffice, if exploded, to cut you off in the beauty of your youth. Death, instantaneous and pulverizing, encircles you, in fact, by the ton; but the man and the thermometer surround you also. The man's eyes never leave the instrument. Both are chosen for their perfect reliability; and endless precautions, innumerable rules, and the strictest discipline maintain Ardeer in a state of busy and peaceful security, and prevent it from being scattered periodically over the calm blue sea that widens endlessly on one side, or the hungry brown acres of Scotland which stretch away to the horizon on the other.

THE NITROGLYCERIN "HILLS."

From the top of one of the nitroglycerin "hills" the factory looks like an enormous and eccentric landscape garden. In every direction rise green embankments, square, conical, or diamond-shaped, from fourteen to seventy feet in height, and covered with long rank grass. Many of them are faced with corrugated iron, and look like high fences. From the top of each mound peeps the red canvas roof of a white wooden house—a house within a hill—which is from one to four stories in

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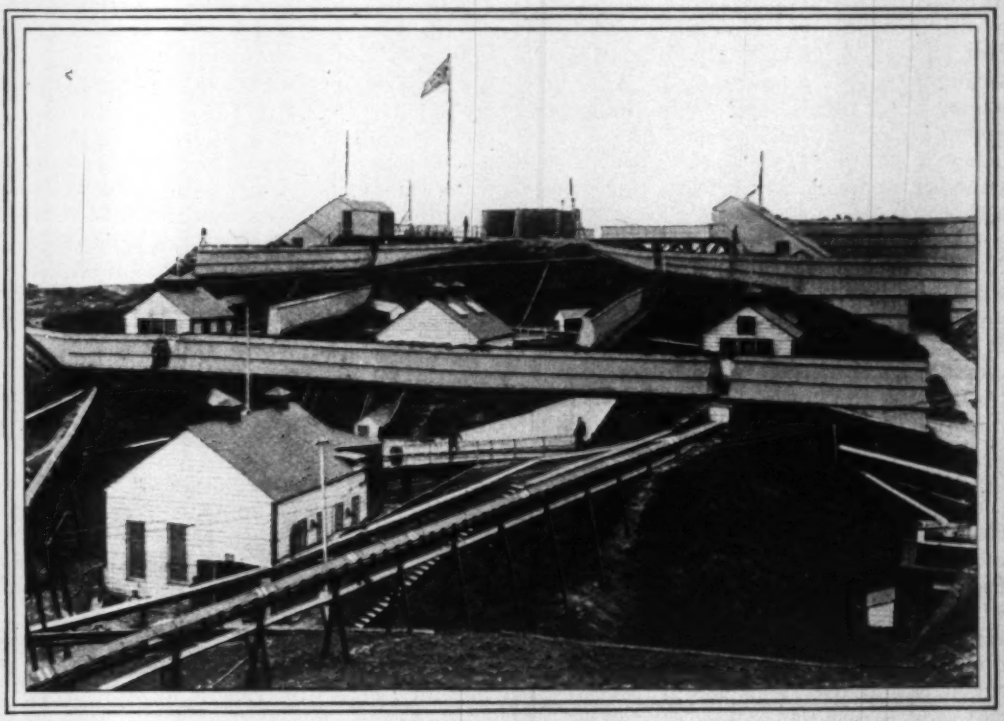
height. Every explosive structure is surrounded by artificial banks, so that in the event of an accident all the others will be protected from concussion or flying fragments. There are three nitroglycerin "hills"; and on the one before you the nitrating-houses, two in number, in which the nitroglycerin is made, stand out in clear relief at the top. They are frail wooden cabins, which were expected by Mr. Nobel when he built them to last six months, but which have not yet been blown to pieces after twenty-five years of constant use. Tunnels through the banks open everywhere. Tramways and lines of pipes on trestles cross each other diversely. This is the "Danger Area," the wide expanse in which the explosives are made and moved about. It is surrounded in an irregular semicircle by fourteen large groups of structures, from which rise fourteen high chimney-stacks. These include the nitric-acid works, acid recovery, ammonia-mill, potash-mill, "guhr"-mill, steam and power houses, box-factories, washing, carding, and bleaching departments for the cotton, pulping-mills, and other contributing industries, connected by steam railway tracks which join the Glasgow line. There are 450 separate structures, now occupying 400 acres out of the 600 owned by the company, which were, when the site was chosen by Mr. Nobel in 1871, a barren waste of sand dunes, stretching for a mile and three-quarters along the sea.

Into this kingdom of high explosives you enter by the courtesy of Mr. C. O. Lundholm, the works manager, under the guidance of the engineer of the works, Mr. E. W. Findlay. The strain upon your nerves begins mildly. Your hair is quite ready to rise, so ready that you can feel it awake and stretch itself at every spot of grease—which may be nitroglycerin—and every stray pinch of cotton—which may be gun-cotton. You now understand for the first time the psychological condition of a shying horse. You go along just as the horse does, with eyes strained at every small object and a lurking predisposition to bolt.

The acid-works are soothing, however. They are quite safe. Nitroglycerin is made from glycerin, the sweetish adjunct of the dressing-table, and nitric acid. The glycerin is bought by hundreds of tons from various sources. In this big barn which you enter the nitric acid is manufactured. In two rows stand fifty-eight



A NITROGLYCERIN "HILL" AT ARDEER.

The nitroglycerin is made in the two houses at the top of the hill, and washed in those immediately beneath. The house in the center is a "drowning-tank," and that at the bottom of the hill is the "final" washing-house. "Every explosive structure is surrounded by artificial banks, so that in the event of an accident all the others will be protected from concussion or flying fragments."

THE "SEARCHER" AT WORK AT THE ENTRANCE TO A NITROGLYCERIN HILL.

"He searches every man who enters, no matter how often the man may come and go."

steel retorts about six feet in diameter and four feet deep, which are bricked up like ovens. Here sulphuric acid, or oil of vitriol, from Glasgow is combined with nitrate of soda from Chili, and the nitric acid thus set free passes over in pipes to a high framework carrying numberless brown earthenware jars in which it condenses. As it passes over it gives off reddish fumes which are suffocating—a whiff of them gives you a fit of coughing, and a full breath of them would choke a locomotive. Mr. Findlay explains that the nitric acid thus made is mixed with a larger quantity of sulphuric acid, and moved in steel pony-cars to a station at the foot of each nitroglycerin "hill." Thence the acids are drawn up by cable or blown up through pipes to a tank at the top of the "hill" by compressed air. You mentally compare the advantages of being blown up with compressed air to being blown up by other means, and smoothing down your hair, enter the "Danger Area."

THE "DANGER AREA."

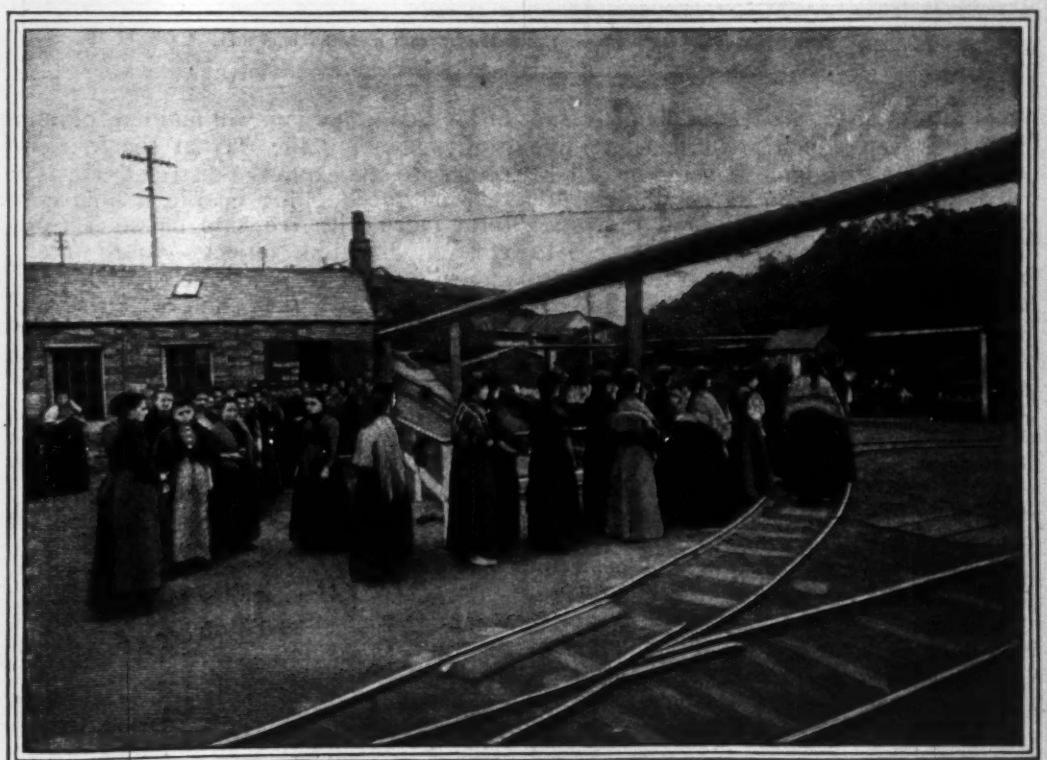
To enter the "Danger Area" you must pass the "searcher." He stands in front of his cabin, and you will find one of him always blocking the way at the four entrances to the explosive district. He is a tall, military-looking man in a blue uniform faced with red, and he takes from you all metallic objects—your watch, money, penknife, scarf-pin, match-case, matches, and keys. None of these are allowed to be where nitroglycerin is. He searches every man who enters, no matter how often the man may come and go. The girls, 200 of whom are employed, are not permitted to wear pins, hair-pins, shoe-buttons, or metal pegs in their shoes, or carry knitting, crochet, or other needles. These regulations are the outgrowth of experience and the long-ago discovery in dynamite cartridges of buttons and other foreign substances calculated to make trouble at unexpected moments. The girls are searched thrice a day by the three matrons who have them in charge. From the lack of hair-pins they wear their hair in braids, tied with ribbons, which gives them all an unduly youthful look. The searcher tells you that his chief trouble is with matches. Some of the lower-class male employees—there are 1,100 men in

the factory—are willing at times to smuggle in matches for a quiet smoke in a secluded corner. This quiet smoke may of course produce a much louder smoke in a corner not secluded, and is therefore rigidly banned. The discipline in the factory is most extraordinary, and to it must be attributed the marvelous immunity from accidents.

At this point, too, you get your first glimpse of the "costumes." A man in a Tam o' Shanter cap comes up clothed from head to foot in vivid scarlet. He belongs to a nitroglycerin house. Then comes a man in dark blue, a "runner" or carrier of explosives. Then comes a man in light blue, who belongs to a smokeless-powder factory. All the girls are in dark blue. The different colors are used so that a superintendent at any distance can always tell if a man is on his own ground and attending to his own work. A few weeks since, a cartridge lassie in dark blue said to a man in scarlet, "Gi'e us a kiss," and he promptly "gi'ed" her one. This unlawful combination of colors caught the eye of an overseer hundreds of yards away, and the pair were instantly removed from the works and the pay-roll. Kissing and skylarking are absolutely prohibited during working hours, but on Saturdays and Sundays the workers make full amends. If reports are to be believed, the workers are more than usually romantic in their tendencies, the alleged cause being the constant breathing of nitroglycerin; and inquiring Pickwicks have taken many notes thereupon, in which the statistics of marriage and population are not entirely neglected.

THE NITRATING-HOUSES.

Having passed the searcher, you mount the "hill," an artificial one, built of sand, and perhaps sixty feet high. On the top of it are two "nitrating-houses." They are of thin clapboards painted white, and are about twenty feet square. These houses are always placed on the tops of "hills," in order that the nitroglycerin, passing from process to process, may flow by its own weight downward. It is not exactly the kind of liquid that one wants to pump. At the door of the house you are confronted by two pairs of yawning rubber shoes. Large shoes of rubber, in-



THE GIRLS OF THE FACTORY UNDERGOING SEARCH BY THE MATRONS.

The girls are searched thrice a day by the three matrons who have them in charge, in order to prevent their wearing or carrying any metallic objects into the works. From the lack of hairpins, which are one of the forbidden articles, they wear their hair in braids.

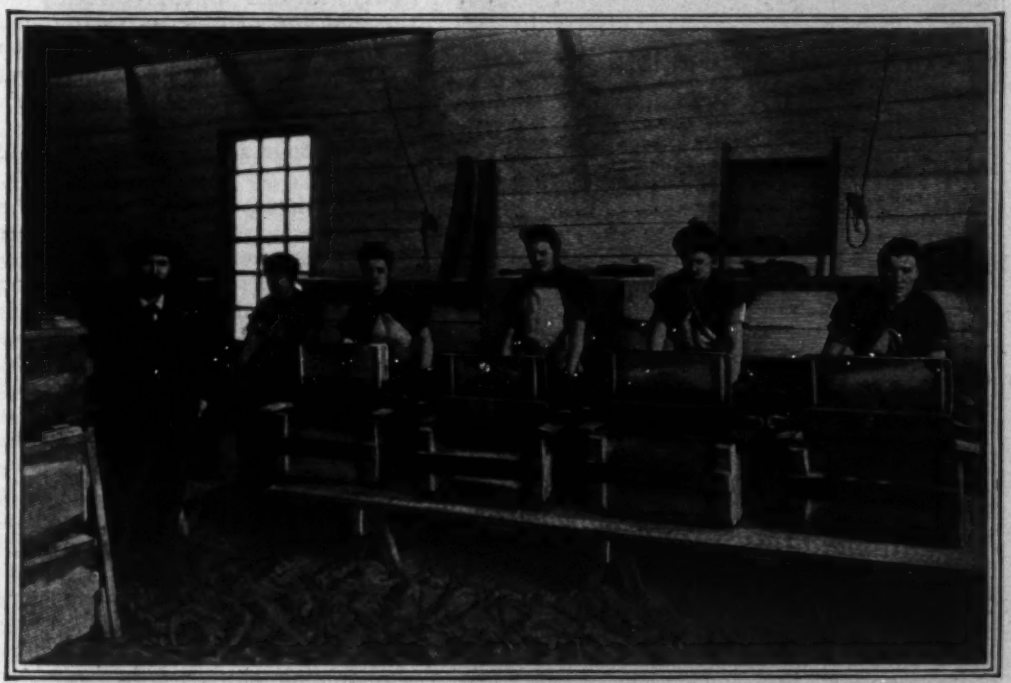
deed, and sometimes even larger ones of leather confront you at the door of every danger house. No shoe which touches the ground outside is allowed to touch the floor of a danger department. The least grit might make friction and lead to an explosion. In all departments the girls are compelled to change to slippers or work barefooted, the majority, in summer, preferring the latter. Having stepped into the overshoes, you begin to flop like a great auk over the sheet-lead which covers the floor. The shoes are trying, particularly as you have other things to worry you. Snow-shoes, ski, and stilts can all be practiced on with advantage before endeavoring to get about in a pair of overshoes which do not fit your own shoes and are ceaselessly trying to trip you up.

A DYNAMITE CARTRIDGE HOUSE.

In the small cabin before the house the girls stop to remove their walking shoes before going to their work.

As you enter the nitrating-house your eye is caught by two lead cylinders, five feet in diameter and six feet deep, which are sunk in the floor. They have closed, dome-shaped tops, over which many lead pipes curl and into which they enter.

At the farther cylinder sits a man in scarlet watching a thermometer. He



INTERIOR OF A MIXING-HOUSE.

Here the mixture of kieselguhr, carbonate of ammonia, and nitroglycerin, which makes dynamite, is thoroughly worked by hand and put through a sieve.

MAKING BLASTING GELATIN CARTRIDGES.

"Blasting gelatin, a yellow, tough, elastic paste, . . . is being forced through a sausage machine, and chopped, by hand, into three-inch lengths."

neither moves, looks up, nor betrays any sign of your presence. The thermometer which he is watching is five feet in length. Only the top or marked portion extends above the cylinder, the tube which carries the mercury reaching down to the hot acids and nitroglycerin. In the cylinder has been placed about a ton and a half of sulphuric acid mixed with a ton of nitric. Into this mixture are now being sprayed 700 pounds of glycerin, the glycerin injector-pipe being joined by another carrying compressed air. As fast as the glycerin spray enters the mixture it seizes the nitrogen of the nitric acid and combines to nitroglycerin, and the sulphuric takes up the water which is thus set free. The process requires fifty-five minutes, during which the 700 pounds of glycerin becomes about 1,500 of nitroglycerin. Great heat is caused by the chemical action, and the absolute necessity is that the heat shall be kept down or it will explode the newly formed nitroglycerin. To this end the cylinder is surrounded by a water-jacket, through which cold water is rushing constantly, and four concentric coils of lead pipe occupy the interior of the cylinder, carrying four steady rushes of cold water.

MAKING DYNAMITE CARTRIDGES.

"The girls work with the greatest rapidity. . . . The sliding brass rod of the machine is actually lubricated with nitroglycerin."

If the heat, through vagaries in the glycerin, rose above the danger point, the thermometer would instantly reveal this to the man on watch. If the thermometer rose ever so little above twenty-two degrees centigrade, the man would turn on more air and shut off the inflow of glycerin. If it continued to rise slowly and he could not stop it by more air and water, he would give a warning shout, "Stand by," to a man watching below. If it continued, he would shout "Let her go," and the man would open a valve; this would sweep the whole charge down to a "drowning-tank" lower down the hill, which would drown the coming explosion in excess of water. The two men the meanwhile would bolt to a safe position behind banks. If the heat rose rap-

idly, too rapidly for "drowning," the man would pull the valve, give a warning shout, and run. So would everybody, you included. You might run on one side to the protecting arms of a dynamite magazine holding twenty tons, or on the other to the soothing shelter of a house where gun-cotton is baking at 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Failing these, there is the pond. This is a sweet, placid pond which is formally blown up once a week because some dregs of nitroglycerin have drained into it and collected at the bottom, making it unsafe. It is comforting to feel, in the hour of danger, that you have havens of perfect security such as these.

The glycerin having duly become nitroglycerin, you flop down the stairs to another department, to witness its separation from the acids with which it is now mixed. It comes shooting down a lead gutter, and falls, a cream-colored stream, to the bottom of a lead tank, eight feet in length and two in width. As soon as the tank is full, the nitroglycerin, lighter than the acid, rises to the surface like oil. It is skimmed off in an aluminium skimmer resembling a tin wash-hand basin with a handle, and is poured into a lead pocket at the end, whence it flows through pipes to a tank, where it receives its first washing with cold water. Thence it goes through gutters farther down to another department, where it is washed with warm water and carbonate of soda. Every particle of the free acid must be removed, as remnants of it might cause chemical action, heat, and explosion in the dynamite or blasting gelatin later on. A sample is taken of each lot of nitroglycerin when made. This is placed in a small clear glass bottle and covered with blue litmus solution, to detect the presence of any remaining free acid, which would color the litmus red. *En passant*, your guide mentions that some years ago one of the foremen was carrying a little felt-lined box of these samples to one of the sample magazines when he unfortunately stumbled and fell. He was blown to pieces.

You have now reached the bottom of the "hill" (all nitroglycerin factories are called "hills"), and are in a wooden cabin, with a floor of loose sand, where the making of dynamite and blasting gelatin actually begins. Dynamite consists merely of liquid nitroglycerin which has been absorbed by some porous material. The liquid was discovered by Sobrero, an Italian, in 1846. Its transport and use were attended with such danger, however, that the late Alfred Nobel conceived, in 1867, the plan of absorbing it in some non-explosive medium. After experimenting with saw-dust, brick-dust, charcoal, paper, rags, and kieselguhr, he finally settled upon the last named as the best material. Kieselguhr, known in the factory as "guhr," is a silicious earth, mainly composed of the skeletons of mosses and microscopic diatoms, which is found as a slaty black peat in Scotland, Germany, and Italy. Before being used it goes to the "guhr-mill," where it is calcined in a large kiln, rolled, and sifted, the result being a very light pink powder of the consistency of flour. In the house you have entered, twenty-five pounds of kieselguhr, with about one pound of carbonate of ammonia, are weighed into a wooden box about three feet square and eighteen inches deep. Upon it is drawn seventy-five pounds of nitroglycerin from the filter tank by a man in scarlet. Another man in scarlet, with his arms bare to the shoulders, takes the box to a table, and gives it a preliminary mix, to see that all the nitroglycerin is roughly absorbed. Then a man in blue seizes it, places it with other boxes on his hand-car or "bogie," and

THE SEARCHER (OF THE CORDITE DEPARTMENT) AT WORK.

pushes the load off to the "mixing-houses."

A DISASTROUS EXPLOSION—THE MIXING-HOUSES.

At half-past six on the morning of the 24th of February, one week after the writer's visit to this house, it was the scene of a very disastrous explosion. Twenty-four hundred pounds of nitroglycerin was collected here, in the tanks and boxes mentioned, and from some cause which may never be known it exploded, killing six people—a chemist, a foreman, and four workmen. A few other employees were slightly hurt by flying débris. The sound was of course tremendous, and the effects of the explosion, which were very clear at Irvine, three and one-half miles away, are said to have been so strong in a town ten miles away that the gas-lamps were extinguished by the air concussion. A disaster such as this, whose suddenness is not its least painful characteristic, cannot of course be minimized in its tragic importance. At the same time, it serves as the best possible testimony to the value of the system of protection employed. That over a ton of nitroglycerin can explode in the heart of a factory where 1,300 people are at work, and only the six men, within a few feet of it, lose their lives, shows better than any other evidence the meaning and value of the Ardeer mounds.

READING THE THERMOMETER BEFORE ENTERING THE TESTING MAGAZINE "INDIA."

It is in "India" that the company's explosives are tested through long periods under high heat and severe cold.

You follow the box to a "mixing-house." This, in the case of dynamite, is a large wooden cabin, containing a long narrow table on each side. In it six girls are at work. The runner sets the open box of the mixture down in the doorway. A girl hoists it to a table, and flies at it with bare arms as if it contained only flour and water. She mixes it thoroughly. Then she takes a big wooden scoop, jabs it into the box, and dumps the scoopful into a raised box of the same size, with a brass sieve bottom. She then, as if the sieve bottom were a washing-board, rubs the dynamite with all her strength against the sieve, forcing it through the small holes. A few of the girls use a leather hand-flap to rub with, but most of them prefer their bare hands. You view the process with consternation. Hitherto you have looked upon dynamite as something to be regarded politely from a safe distance as if it were a rattle-snake. The girls handle it, however, as coolly as if it were the sand on the floor. Some of it is continually spilt, of course, and mixes with this sand, but the sand is all removed at short intervals and buried. One of the few fatal accidents in the history of Ardeer took place near this house. A cartridge hut wherein four girls were working exploded, killing the girls. Burning dust from this hut fell into the open boxes of dynamite in three other huts. The dynamite began to blaze, and the deadly smoke from it, which consists of hyponitric-acid fumes, immediately filled the huts. Two girls in each hut had the courage to jump over the blazing boxes, and escaped; but the others, six in number, were suffocated in a few minutes. Thus, ten persons lost

their lives. When the huts were entered, the six girls were found seated in perfectly natural attitudes, their faces showing no trace of agony or fear. It was evident that, having been stunned by the sudden explosion, they had been suffocated before recovering from the shock. It will be noted that the loose dynamite burned and did not explode. This is one of several curious facts concerning dynamite which will be considered later.

It may be well to state at this point that the two hundred and odd young ladies employed in this dangerous work are all strictly beautiful. Everybody who visits the factory admits this at once. Nobody, in fact, seems inclined to invidious comparisons among strong and courageous girls, when each of them has enough dynamite in her possession to blow a hole in Scotland. Moreover, there is some reason for the statement. The breathing of nitroglycerin by the workers gives them a universal clearness of skin, and among the fairer girls the contrast of scarlet and white in their faces is most unusual. You learn that (perhaps in consequence of their complexions) the girls marry quickly after entering the factory.

THE CARTRIDGE HOUSES.

After being rubbed through the sieves the dynamite becomes a finely divided, greasy, coffee-colored earth. It is now the dynamite of commerce, and is ready to be made into cartridges. As you approach one of the cartridge houses, which are small white one-story buildings, you hear a tremendous thumping. You ask your guide in some perturbation if it is a good day to look at cartridge houses, but he smiles and says that the noise is merely the cartridge machines. The hut is about ten feet square, with a single door. Four girls are at work. Against the right and left walls are four spring pump-handles about the height of a girl's head. Each pump-handle when pulled down forces a brass rod through a small conical hopper of loose dynamite fixed to the wall, and jams a portion of the dynamite down a brass tube at the bottom of the box. The girl wraps a small square of branded parch-

INTERIOR OF THE BARN-LIKE BUILDING WHERE NITRO-COTTON IS MADE.

To make nitro-cotton, cotton waste is mixed with sulphuric and nitric acid. . . . "In a few minutes the chemical combination takes place, the acid is poured off, and the nitro-cotton receives its first washing."

ment paper around the bottom of the tube, folding it at the lower end. Then, holding the paper with one hand, and jumping up and down as she works the pump-handle with the other, she pushes dynamite down the tube till the paper cylinder is filled to a depth of about three inches. She then removes it, folds down the top of it, drops it through a slide in the wall, whence it rolls down into her own special box a finished cartridge. She replenishes her stock of dynamite with a scoop through a sliding door in the wall, from a box of loose dynamite which the runner has placed in a closed chest immediately outside. The girls work with the greatest rapidity. The sliding brass rod is actually lubricated with nitroglycerin. To see this operation—the brass rods flying up and down, damp with nitroglycerin, and dynamite being forcibly jammed down a brass tube—entirely destroys your appetite for further knowledge. It is incredible, and you want to go away, outside the "Danger Area," and think it over. But your guide takes you instead to a blasting gelatin cartridge hut. Here blasting gelatin, a yellow, tough, elastic paste, which consists of about seven per cent. of nitro-cotton and ninety-three of nitroglycerin, is being forced through a sausage machine, chopped, by hand, into three-inch lengths with a wooden wedge upon a lead-covered table, and wrapped into cartridges, at the greatest speed. Blasting gelatin is fifty per cent. more powerful than dynamite, and the effect on your mind is to make you exactly fifty per cent. more uncomfortable than before; to multiply by one and one-half your desire to get away before any *contretemps* occurs which you would be in no position to either explain or avoid.

There are forty-five cartridge huts, all heated by steam to not less than fifty degrees Fahrenheit. Nitroglycerin congeals at forty-three Fahrenheit and freezes at forty, so the huts must be kept warm. If the dynamite were allowed to rest against a steam-pipe an explosion might follow, and the pipes are carefully boxed, and the thermometer is always watched by the eye of authority. In addition to dynamite and blasting gelatin cartridges, the company manufacture cartridges of gelatine dynamite and gelignite, combinations of nitroglycerin, nitro-cotton, nitrate of potash, and wood meal. The gelatin explosives are specially adapted for use under water, being entirely unaffected by dampness of any kind. The company also make "Ardeer powder" and "carbonite"—explosives for blasting purposes in fiery coal mines, with a lower percentage of nitroglycerin than dynamite. The output of explosives of all kinds is an average of about one hundred tons per week.

MAKING NITRO-COTTON ON A MAMMOTH SCALE.

Nitro-cotton, which by itself and in combination with nitroglycerin as cordite and ballistite is rapidly displacing gunpowder in every direction, is made and used by the ton at Ardeer. It is made from cotton-waste, the waste left on the spindles in the cotton-mills. This comes to Ardeer in bales, like bales of finished cotton, and is first washed, to remove all grease and dirt, carded, and reduced to a homogeneous mass in a big mill devoted to these processes. Then it goes to a great barn-like building where it is turned into soluble nitro-cotton or insoluble gun-cotton, as may be desired, the process taking place in small iron pans or hundreds of earthenware jars. Half the floor is taken up by these jars, which sit side by side in a shallow tank of cement about a foot deep. The object of this tank is to keep the jars cool by surrounding them with water during the nitration. Along one side of the room are the acid taps and lead pans. Four pounds of cotton are placed in a pan, and one hundred and fifteen pounds of mixed sulphuric and nitric acid are added. In a few minutes the chemical combination takes place, the acid is poured off, and the nitro-cotton receives its first washing. From this point, until every particle of the acid has been washed out of it, it is liable to burn spontaneously at any instant. As one of the workmen dumps the pan load into the "centrifugal" or acid separator, it may go up with a flash and a great column of yellow smoke; and this not unfrequently happens, but does no great harm except, perhaps, to beards and eyebrows. It takes fire slowly and gives full warning. It now goes to another department and is washed repeatedly, kept for a week in water tanks, pulped in ordinary pulping-mills, and dried in rotary centrifugal machines until all but thirty per cent. of the water is eliminated. The remainder is dried out of it on the shelves of a great drying-house, where a temperature of from 100 to 120 degrees Fahrenheit is maintained by hot air through fans.

At Ardeer this nitro-cotton is used in

THE MAN AND THE THERMOMETER IN ONE OF THE NITRATING-HOUSES.

"Death, instantaneous and pulverizing, encircles you, in fact, by the ton; but the man and the thermometer surround you also. The man's eyes never leave the instrument."

enormous quantities in combination with nitroglycerin to make blasting gelatin, of which it contributes seven per cent.; cordite, of which it is forty per cent.; and ballistite, which consists of sixty per cent. of soluble nitro-cotton and forty per cent. nitroglycerin. The extraordinary affinity of soluble nitro-cotton for nitroglycerin is a curious chemical fact. No matter how much water is present in the mixing-tank, every particle of gun-cotton will find and absorb the nitroglycerin, and this "wet-mixing process" as invented and carried on at Ardeer is admirable of its kind. The material for cordite, in the form of cordite paste, is made in

large quantities at Ardeer, and sent to the government factory at Waltham, where the government smokeless ammunition is made. Ballistite is a specialty at Ardeer, and is rapidly displacing the other smokeless powders for sporting purposes. Its admirers claim that it is stronger than any other, cleaner in the gun, perfectly smokeless, and entirely unaffected by heat or dampness. It can be soaked in water and fired without any loss of efficiency. Since the professional pigeon shots have largely adopted it, and the weekly scores in the sporting papers show the majority of kills to its credit, the shot-gun fraternity, so numerous in England, have taken to it *en masse*. Ballistite is made in three forms: in cubes for cannon, in minute rings for rifles, and in square flakes for shot-guns. As first made and dried, it is a light brown, elastic paste. This is run through steel rollers which are heated to 120 degrees till it becomes as thin as tissue paper and transparent. It is like thin, elastic sheets of silky horn. Then it is cut up in cutting-machines into grains of various sizes for rifles or shot-guns, as the case may be.

These processes are most ingenious and mechanically interesting, and occupy several large mills by themselves. In all are the thermometers and the shoes. The machinery in nearly all cases represents original inventions, either conceived in Ardeer or invented by Mr. Nobel, who was the originator of smokeless powders. Absolute cleanliness reigns. Dust is never allowed to collect, and the small quantity of sweepings from the leaden floors are daily burned.

The subsidiary departments are full of interest. "India" and "Siberia" are two magazines where the company's explosives and others from all sources are tested through long periods under high heat and severe cold respectively. "India" is of course the more dangerous, and before entering it your guide climbs a ladder on the embankment which surrounds it and peeps through a three-inch hole to read the thermometer projecting from the roof of the house inside. "India" caught fire in 1895, and would have harmed nothing but itself had not some over-eager firemen gone inside the banks and attempted to extinguish the fire. In the explosion which occurred two were killed and two other employees injured. To avoid a repetition of this occurrence a huge sprinkler now rises in the center of the hut, by means of which at the first sign of fire the whole interior can be deluged from a safe distance. A thermo-electric "tell-tale" also runs from "India" to a laboratory.

In the packing-houses the cartridges are packed by girls into five-pound cardboard boxes, which in turn are grouped in fifty-pound wooden cases. These cases are taken in hand-cars to the magazines and thence to the beach, the railways running into the sea. The cases are transferred to boats and loaded into the company's own steamers, which carry them to all the Channel and neighboring ports for shipment all over the world. There are also sample magazines, an armory containing all the ancient and modern small arms; a shooting range, with its attendant officers and experts, where the explosives for rifles and shot-guns are carefully tested; laboratories, and contributing departments of all kinds.

REMARKABLE FREEDOM FROM CASUALTIES.

Having now inspected the factory in all its interesting entirety, you are confronted with a statement so extraordinary as to be almost incredible, viz., that despite the manufacture by the ton of all these deadly explosives, Ardeer is one of the safest factories that you could possibly be in. In the whole period of its existence, about twenty-five years, the entire loss of life by accidents, including the sad occurrence of February 24th, has been only twenty-one. This, compared with the number of people employed, is lower than the death-rate in any cotton-mill, woolen-mill, foundry, boiler-shop, shipyard, or other large manufactory. The main cause of this excellent showing is the admirable character of the discipline imposed and the firm and careful system of management. But the rigid, intelligent, and systematic way in which explosive factories are guarded by government regulations and government inspectors undoubtedly also plays a large part in this result.

The nitroglycerin compounds, however, are far from being as dangerous as is generally supposed. Nitroglycerin itself is always a possible source of explosion, but up to this year no accident had ever attended its manufacture at Ardeer. The accidents that have occurred have been due to the handling of it after it has been made. With regard to dynamite, its actual safety as an explosive was ever the pride of its late inventor, Mr. Nobel. He claimed that dynamite could not be exploded by being thrown to the ground from any

height; that it could sustain any degree of shock without explosion. He claimed for blasting gelatin that, in addition to being the strongest, it was absolutely the safest explosive known. In proof of this he devised a series of experiments which have been often performed at the factory and which have never failed. They may be seen at any time by a visitor whom the company desires to convince, and as given on a late occasion were as follows:

1. A cube of iron weighing 420 pounds was hoisted on crossed poles above an ordinary packing-box containing fifty pounds of dynamite cartridges, the box resting on a board on the ground. The rope was cut by electrically exploding a cartridge against it, and the weight fell twenty-five feet, smashing the box completely and pulverizing some of the cartridges; but there was no explosion.

2. The same experiment was repeated with a box of blasting gelatin cartridges, the fall being twenty-five feet and the iron weight 470 pounds. Box and contents were crushed and scattered, but there was no explosion.

3. A one-pound tin of gunpowder was placed on an open five-pound box of dynamite cartridges and exploded. The dynamite caught fire and burned up, but did not explode.

4. The same experiment was performed with a five-pound box of blasting gelatin cartridges with the same result.

5. A dynamite cartridge was set on fire by a fuse, and burned rather rapidly. It would have burned away completely, but a detonator had been placed in the middle, and when the flame reached this the other half of the cartridge exploded.

VIEW OF AN EXPLOSION OF FORTY-FIVE POUNDS OF BLASTING GELATIN AT ARDEER IN MARCH, 1896.

Depth of water, eleven feet. Height of column, 300 feet. Photograph taken 200 yards off; exposure, one-sixtieth of a second.

VIEW OF AN EXPLOSION OF TEN THOUSAND POUNDS OF BLASTING GELATIN AT ARDEER IN MARCH, 1896.

Depth of water, eleven feet. Height of column, 1,500 feet. Photograph taken one mile off; exposure, one-sixtieth of a second.

6. To show the strictly local force of dynamite, a one-pound cartridge was hung eight inches above a three-eighths of an inch boiler-plate, which was lying on two bits of wood, and exploded. The plate was only slightly bent.

7. A similar cartridge was laid flat upon the same plate and exploded, the result being a hole torn in the plate about the size of the cartridge.

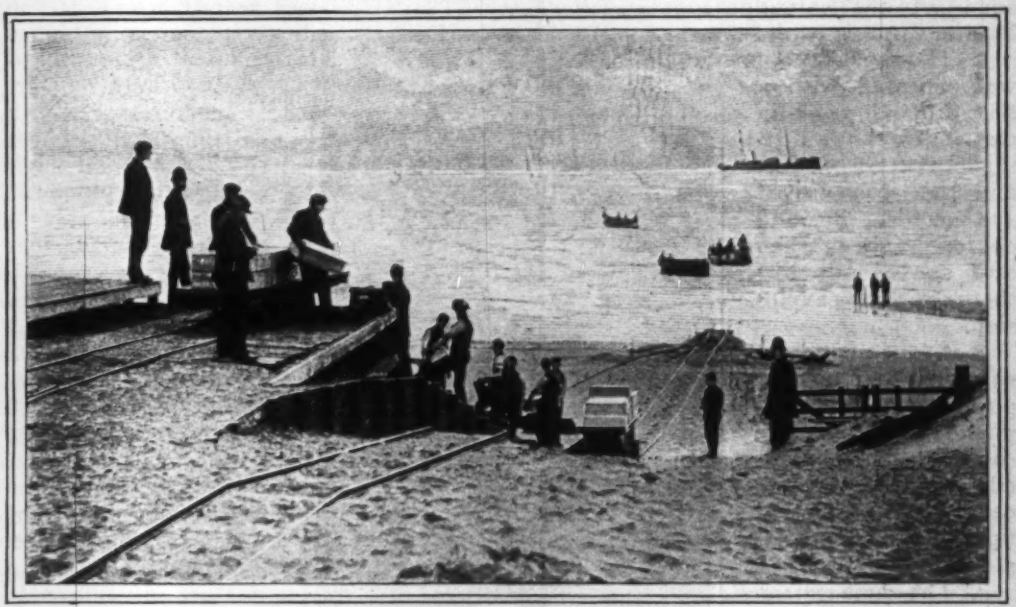
8. A similar cartridge was then placed on a similar plate and covered with sand. Upon exploding, it tore a large hole in the plate.

Dynamite and blasting gelatin when set on fire will merely burn. If the dynamite is in a loose form, it will entirely burn away without danger. If compressed, both will burn until the heat reaches a point high enough to explode the remainder, but this always requires sufficient time to give bystanders full warning and enable them to reach a point of safety. All the nitroglycerin compounds are exploded by detonation; that is, by means of explosive caps like percussion caps which fit on the ends of the fuses. The cap explosive is a mixture of fulminate of mercury and chlorate of potash, and the Nobel company have a large and separate factory in Scotland which is devoted to the manufacture of

fulminate of mercury and various kinds of detonators. The explosive force of No. 1 dynamite, weight for weight, is four times that of gunpowder. Bulk for bulk, the dynamite being much heavier, it is over seven times as powerful as gunpowder. Blasting gelatin has nearly six times, weight for weight, and a fraction less than ten times, bulk for bulk, the power of gunpowder. Gun-cotton and No. 1 dynamite are about equal in explosive strength. Dynamite is not allowed on passenger trains in England, but is transported with great freedom on the Continent, and thirty thousand tons of it have been shipped on the English and Continental railways without accident up to date. Of course, every package and case carry explicit instructions, but that the danger is small the immunity from explosions in transport clearly shows.

The moral of which is, that dynamite is safe and blasting gelatin is safer if they are treated with only reasonable care. "The accidents do not occur here but in the use of it," says Mr. Johnston. "If the company's explicit printed instructions were followed, accidents would scarcely be known." Accidents often occur in thawing after an explosive has been frozen; but these arise from the incredible recklessness of miners. Small accidents, also, transpire at Ardeer in the repair of pipes. A drop of nitroglycerin which has secreted itself in a crack or crevice in the metal is sometimes struck by a hard tool, and costs a plumber one or more fingers.

These facts concerning dynamite are well known, and they are very reassuring. As you enter the train to leave Ardeer, however, the old habit of doubt reasserts itself. A bit of white fluff on your coat sleeve is viewed with the greatest suspicion. The question arises, "Is it cotton or gun-cotton?" Nerving yourself to the ordeal, you deliberately pick it off. You then carefully throw it out of the window to wreak its fell purpose, if it has one, on the landscape. Then you settle back with a vague desire to look at a thermometer. You have acquired a respect, an admiration, for any and all thermometers, which will abide with you to the end of your days.



SHIPPING AT ARDEER BEACH.

The high explosives (dynamite and other cartridges in fifty-pound cases) are run into the sea on hand-cars, lifted into boats, and finally put on board the company's steamers, for shipment all over the world.

The PERSONS of the Story as they appear in PART I.

SLAVES OF THE LAMP.

By Rudyard Kipling,

Author of "The Jungle Book," "The Seven Seas," "Captains Courageous," etc.

I.

THE music-room on the top floor of Number Five was filled with the "Aladdin" company at rehearsal. Dickson Quartus, commonly known as Dick Four, was Aladdin, stage manager, ballet master, half the orchestra, and largely librettist, for the "book" had been rewritten and filled with local allusions. The pantomime was to be given next week, in the downstairs study occupied by Aladdin, Abanazar, and the Emperor of China. The Slave of the Lamp, with the Princess Badroulbadour and the Widow Twankay, owned the little study across the same landing, so that the company could be easily assembled. The floor shook to the stamp-and-go of the ballet, while Aladdin, in pink cotton tights, a blue and tinsel jacket, and a plumed hat, banged alternately on the piano and his banjo. He was the moving spirit of the game, as befitted a senior who had passed his Army Preliminary and hoped to enter Sandhurst next spring.

Aladdin came to his own at last, Abanazar lay poisoned on the floor, and the Widow Twankay danced her dance, and the company decided it would "come all right on the night."

"What about the last song, though?" said the Emperor, a tallish, fair-headed boy with the ghost of a mustache, at which he pulled manfully. "We need a rousing old tune."

"'John Peel'? 'Drink, Puppy, Drink'?" suggested Abanazar, smoothing his baggy lilac pajamas. Abanazar never looked more than one-half awake, but he owned a soft, slow smile which well suited the part of the Wicked Uncle.

"Stale," said Aladdin. "Might as well have 'Grandfather's Clock.' What's that thing you were humming at 'prep' last night, Stalky?"

The Slave of the Lamp, in black tights and doublet, a black silk half-mask on his forehead, whistled lazily where he lay on the top of the piano. It was a catchy music-hall tune.

Dick Four cocked his head critically, and squinted down a large red nose.

"Once more, and I can pick it up," he said, strumming. "Sing the words."

"Arrah, Patsy, mind the baby! Arrah, Patsy, mind the child!
Wrap him in an overcoat, he's surely going wild!
Arrah, Patsy, mind the baby! just you mind the child awhile!
He'll kick and bite and cry all night! Arrah, Patsy, mind the child!"

"Rippin'! Oh, rippin'!" said Dick Four. "Only we shan't have any piano on the night. We must work it with the ban-

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joes—play an' dance at the same time. You try, Tertius."

The Emperor pushed aside his pea-green sleeves of state, and followed Dick Four on a heavy nickel-plated banjo.

"Yes, but I'm dead. Bung in the middle of the stage, too," said Abanazar.

"Oh, that's Beetle's biznai," said Dick Four. "Vamp it up, Beetle. Don't keep us waiting all night. You've got to get Pussy out of the light somehow, and bring us all in dancin' at the end."

"All right. You two play it again," said Beetle, who, in a gray skirt and a wig of chestnut sausage-curls, set slantwise above a pair of spectacles mended with an old boot-lace, represented the Widow Twankay. He waved one leg in time to the hammered refrain, and the banjoes grew louder.

"Um! Ah! Er —'Aladdin now has won his wife,'" he sang, and Dick Four repeated it.

"'Your Emperor is appeased.'" Tertius flung out his chest as he delivered his line.

"Now jump up, Pussy! Say, 'I think I'd better come to life!' Then we all take hands and come forward: 'We hope you've all been pleased.' *Twiggez-vous?*"

". . . WHILE ALADDIN IN PINK COTTON TIGHTS . . ."

"*Nous twiggons.* Good enough. What's the chorus for the ballet? It's four kicks and a turn," said Dick Four.

"Oh! Er!

> John Short will ring the curtain down,
> And ring the prompter's bell;
> We hope you know before you go
> That we all wish you well."

"Rippin'! Rippin'! Now for the Widow's scene with the Princess. Hurry up, McTurk."

A dark, sallow, raw-boned Irish boy in a violet silk skirt and a coquettish blue turban slouched forward as one thoroughly ashamed of himself. The Slave of the Lamp climbed down from the piano, and dispassionately kicked him. "Play up, Turkey," he said; "this is serious." But there fell on the door the knock of authority. It happened to be King, the most hated of the housemasters—King in gown and mortar-board enjoying a Saturday evening prowl before dinner.

"Locked doors! Locked doors!" he snapped with a scowl. "What's the meaning of this; and what, may I ask, is the intention of this—this epicene attire?"

"Pantomime, sir. The Head gave us leave," said Abanazar, as the only member of the Sixth concerned. Dick Four stood firm in the confidence born of well-fitting tights, but Beetle strove to efface himself behind the piano. A gray princess-skirt borrowed from a day-boy's mother and a spotted cotton bodice unsystematically padded with writing-paper make one ridiculous. And in other regards Beetle had a bad conscience.

"As usual!" sneered King. "Futile foolery just when your careers, such as they may be, are hanging in the balance. I see! Ah, I see! The old gang of criminals—allied forces of disorder—Corkran"—the Slave of the Lamp smiled politely—"McTurk"—the Irishman scowled—"and, of course, the unspeakable Beetle, our friend Gigadibs." Abanazar, the Emperor, and Aladdin had more or less of characters, and King passed them over. "Come forth, my inky buffoon, from behind yonder instrument of music! You supply, I presume, the doggerel for this entertainment. Esteem yourself to be, as it were, a poet?"

"He's found one of 'em," thought Beetle, noting the flush on King's cheek-bone.

"I have just had the pleasure of reading an effusion of yours to my address, I believe—an effusion intended to rhyme. So—so you despise me, Master Gigadibs, do you? I am quite aware—you need not explain—that it was ostensibly *not* intended

for my edification. I read it with laughter—yes, with laughter. These paper pellets of inky boys—still a boy we are, Master Gigadibs—do not disturb my equanimity."

"Wonder which it was," thought Beetle. He had launched many lampoons on an appreciative public ever since he discovered that it was possible to convey reproof in rhyme.

In sign of his unruffled calm, King proceeded to tear Beetle, whom he called Gigadibs, slowly asunder. From his untied shoestrings to his mended spectacles (the life of a poet at a big school is hard) he held him up to the derision of his associates—with the usual result. His wild flowers of speech—King had an unpleasant tongue—restored him to good humor at the last. He drew a lurid picture of Beetle's latter end as a scurrilous pamphleteer dying in an attic, scattered a few compliments over McTurk and Corkran, and, reminding Beetle that he must come up for judgment when called upon, went to common-room, where he triumphed anew over his victims.

"And the worst of it," he explained in a loud voice over his soup, "is that I waste such gems of sarcasm on their thick heads. It's miles above them, I'm certain."

"We-ell," said the school chaplain slowly, "I don't know what Corkran's appreciation of your style may be, but young McTurk reads Ruskin for his amusement."

"Nonsense, Clay! He does it to show off. I mistrust the dark Celt."

"He does nothing of the kind. I went into their study the other night, unofficially, and McTurk was gluing up the back of four odd numbers of 'Fors Clavigera.'"

"I don't know anything about their private lives," said a mathematical master hotly, "but I've learned by bitter experience that Number Five study are best left alone. They are utterly soulless young devils." He blushed as the others laughed.

But in the music-room there was wrath and bad language. Only "Stalky" Corkran, Slave of the Lamp, lay on the piano unmoved.

"That little swine Manders minor must have shown him your stuff. He's always suckin' up to King. Go out and kill him," he drawled. "Which one was it, Beetle?"

"Dunno," said Beetle, struggling out of the skirt. "There was one about his hunting for popularity with the small boys, and the other one was one about him in hell, tellin' the devil he was a Balliol man. I swear both of 'em rhymed all right. By gum! P'raps Manders minor showed him both! *I'll* correct his cæsuras."

He disappeared down two flights of stairs, flushed a small pink and white boy in a form-room next door to King's study, which, again, was immediately below his own, and chased him up the corridor into a form-room sacred to the revels of the Lower Third. Thence he came back, greatly disordered, to find McTurk, Stalky, and the others of the company in his study enjoying an unlimited "brew"—coffee, cocoa, buns, new bread hot and steaming, sardine, sausage, ham, and tongue paste,

"THE FLOOR SHOOK TO THE STAMP AND GO OF THE BALLET."

"THE SLAVE OF THE LAMP CLIMBED DOWN FROM THE PIANO AND DISPASSIONATELY KICKED HIM."

pilchards, three jams, and at least as many pounds of Devonshire cream.

"My hat!" said he, throwing himself upon the banquet. "Who stumped up for this, Stalky?" It was within a month of term end, and blank starvation had reigned in the studies for weeks.

"You," said Stalky, serenely.

"Confound you! You haven't been popping my Sunday bags, then?"

"Keep your hair on. It's only your watch."

"Watch! I lost it—weeks ago. Out on the Burrows, when we tried to shoot the old ram—the day our pistol burst."

"It dropped out of your pocket (you're so beastly careless, Beetle), and McTurk and I kept it for you. I've been wearing it for a week, and you never noticed. Took it into Bideford after dinner to-day. Got thirteen and sevenpence. Here's the ticket."

"Well, that's pretty average cool," said Abanazar behind a slab of cream and jam, as Beetle, reassured upon the safety of his Sunday trousers, showed not even surprise, much less resentment. Indeed, it was McTurk who grew angry, saying:

"You gave him the ticket, Stalky? You *pawned* it? You unmitigated beast! Why, last month you and Beetle sold mine! Never got a sniff of any ticket."

"Ah, that was because you locked your trunk and we wasted half the afternoon hammering it open. We might have pawned it if you'd behaved like a Christian, Turkey."

"My aunt!" said Abanazar, "you chaps *are* communists. Vote of thanks to Beetle, though."

"That's beastly unfair," said Stalky, "when I took all the trouble to pawn it. Beetle never knew he had a watch. Oh, I say, Rabbits-Eggs gave me a lift into Bideford this afternoon."

Rabbits-Eggs was the local carrier—an outcrop of the early Devonian formation. It was Stalky who had invented his unlovely name. "He was pretty average drunk or he wouldn't have done it. Rabbits-Eggs is a little shy of me, somehow. But I swore it was *pax* between us, and gave him a bob. He stopped at two pubs on the way in; he'll be howling drunk to-night. Oh, don't begin reading, Beetle; there's a council of war on. What the deuce is the matter with your collar?"

"Chivied Manders minor into the Lower Third box-room. Had all his beastly little friends on top of me," said Beetle, from behind a jar of pilchards and a book.

"You ass! Any fool could have told you where Manders would bunk to," said McTurk.

"I didn't think," said Beetle, meekly, scooping out pilchards with a spoon.

"Course you didn't. You never do." McTurk adjusted Beetle's collar with a savage tug. "Don't drop oil all over my 'Fors,' or I'll scrag you!"

"Shut up, you—you Irish Biddy! 'Tisn't your beastly 'Fors.' It's one of mine."

The book was a fat, brown-backed volume of the latter sixties, which King had once thrown at Beetle's head that Beetle might see whence the name Gigadibs came. Beetle had quietly annexed the book, and had seen—several things. The quarter-comprehended verses lived and ate with him, as the be-dropped pages showed. He removed himself from all that world, drifting at large with wondrous men and women, till McTurk hammered the pilchard spoon on his head and he snarled.

"Beetle! You're oppressed and insulted and bullied by that beast King. Don't you feel it?"

"Leave me alone! I can write some more poetry about him if I am, I suppose."

"Mad! Quite mad!" said Stalky to the visitors, as one exhibiting strange beasts. "Beetle reads an ass called Brownin', and McTurk reads an ass called Ruskin; and—"

"Ruskin isn't an ass," said McTurk. "He's almost as good as the Opium Eater. He says 'we're children of noble races trained by surrounding art.' That means me, and the way I decorated the study when you two badgers would have stuck up brackets and Christmas cards. Child of a noble race, trained by surrounding art, stop reading, or I'll shove a pilchard down your neck!"

"SO—SO YOU DESPISE ME, MASTER GIGADIBS, DO YOU?"

"It's two to one," said Stalky, warningly, and Beetle closed the book, in obedience to the law under which he and his companions had lived for six checkered years.

The visitors looked on delighted. Number Five study had a reputation for more variegated insanity than the rest of the school put together; and so far as its code allowed friendship with outsiders it was polite and open-hearted to its neighbors on the same landing.

"What rot do you want to do now?" said Beetle.

"King! War!" said McTurk, jerking his head toward the wall, where hung a small wooden West African war-drum, a gift to McTurk from a naval uncle.

"Then we shall be turned out of the study again," said Beetle, who loved his flesh-pots. "Mason turned us out for —just warbling on it." Mason was the mathematical master who had testified in common-room.

"Warbling?—O my!" said Abanazar. "We couldn't hear ourselves speak in our study when you played the infernal thing. What's the good of getting turned out of your study, anyhow?"

"We lived in the form-rooms for a week, too," said Beetle, tragically. "And it was beastly cold."

"Ye-es, but Mason's rooms were filled with rats every day we were out. It took him a week to draw the inference," said McTurk. "He loathes rats. Minute he let us go back the rats stopped. Mason's a little shy of us now, but there was no evidence."

"Jolly well there wasn't," said Stalky, "when I got out on the roof and dropped the beastly things down his chimney. But, look here, question is, are our characters good enough just now to stand a study row?"

"Never mind mine," said Beetle. "King swears I haven't any."

"I'm not thinking of you," Stalky returned, scornfully. "*You* aren't going up for the army, you old bat. *I* don't want to be expelled—and the Head's getting rather shy of us, too."

"Rot!" said McTurk. "The Head never expels except for beastliness or stealing. But I forgot; you and Stalky *are* thieves—regular burglars."

The visitors gasped, but Stalky interpreted the parable with large grins.

"Well, you know, that little beast Manders minor saw Beetle and me hammerin' McTurk's trunk open in the dormitory when we took his watch last month. Of course Manders sneaked to Mason, and Mason solemnly took it up as a case of theft, to get even with us about the rats."

"That delivered Mason into our hands," said McTurk, blandly. "We were awfully nice to him, 'cause he was a new master and wanted to win the confidence of the boys. Pity he draws inferences, though. Stalky went to his study and pretended to

blub, and told Mason he'd lead a new life if Mason would let him off this time, but Mason wouldn't. Said it was his duty to report him to the Head."

"Vindictive swine!" said Beetle. "It was all those rats! Then *I* blubbed, too, and Stalky confessed that he'd been a thief in regular practice for six years, ever since he came to the school; and that I'd taught him—*à la* Fagin. Mason turned white with joy; thought he had us on toast."

"Gorgeous! Gorgeous!" said Dick Four. "We never heard of this."

"Course not. Mason kept it jolly quiet. He wrote down all our statements on impot-paper. There wasn't anything he wouldn't believe," said Stalky.

"And handed it all up to the Head, *with* an extempore prayer. It took about forty pages," said Beetle. "I helped a lot."

"And then, you crazy idiots?" said Abanazar.

"Oh, we were sent for; and Stalky asked to have the 'depositions' read out, and the Head knocked him spinning into a waste-paper basket. Then he gave us eight cuts apiece — welters — for — for — takin' unheard-of liberties with a new master. I saw his shoulders shaking when we went out. Do you know," said Beetle, pensively, "that Mason can't look at us now in second lesson without blushing? We three stare at him sometimes till he regularly trickles. He's an awfully sensitive beast."

"He read 'Eric, or Little by Little,'" said McTurk; "so we gave him 'St. Winifred's, or the World of School.' They spent all their spare time stealing at St. Winifred's, when they weren't praying or getting drunk at pubs. Well, that was only a week ago, and the Head's a little bit shy of us. He called it constructive devilry. Stalky invented it all."

"Not the least good having a row with a master unless you can make him ridiculous," said Stalky, extended at ease on the hearth-rug. "If Mason didn't know Number Five—well, he's learnt, that's all. Now, my dearly beloved 'earers"—Stalky curled his legs under him and addressed the company—"we've got that strong, perseverin' man King on our hands. He went miles out of his way to provoke a conflict." (Here Stalky snapped down the black silk domino and assumed the air of a judge.) "He has oppressed Beetle, McTurk, and me, *privatim et seriatim*, one by one, as he could catch us. But *now* he has insulted Number Five up in the music-room, and in the presence of these—these ossifers of the Ninety-third, wot look like hairdressers. Benjamin, we must make him cry 'Capivi!'"

Stalky's reading did *not* include Browning or Ruskin.

"And, besides," said McTurk, "he's a

"TO FIND McTURK, STALKY, AND THE OTHERS OF THE COMPANY IN HIS STUDY ENJOYING AN UNLIMITED 'BREW'——"

Philistine, a basket-hanger. He wears a tartan tie. Ruskin says any man who wears a tartan tie will, without doubt, be damned everlastingly."

"Bravo, McTurk," said Tertius; "I thought he was only a beast."

"He's that, too, of course, but he's *worse*. He has a china basket with blue ribbons and a pink kitten on it, hung up in his window to grow musk in. You know when I got all that old oak carvin' out of Bideford Church, when they were restoring it (Ruskin says any man who'll restore a church is an unmitigated sweep), and stuck it up here with glue? Well, King came in and wanted to know whether we'd done it with a fret-saw! Yah! He is the King of basket-hangers!"

"YESS, YEOU, YEOU LONG-NOSED, POWER-EYED, GINGY-WHISKERED BEGGAR!"

Down went McTurk's inky thumb over an imaginary arena full of bleeding Kings. "*Placetne*, child of a generous race!" he cried to Beetle.

"Well," began Beetle, doubtfully, "he comes from Balliol, but I'm going to give the beast a chance. You see I can always make him hop with some more poetry. He can't report me to the Head, because it makes him ridiculous. (Stalky's quite right.) But he shall have his chance."

Beetle opened the book on the table, ran his finger down a page, and began at random:

> "Or who in Moscow toward the Czar,
> With the demurest of footfalls,
> Over the Kremlin's pavement white
> With serpentine and syenite,
> Steps with five other generals—"

"That's no good. Try another," said Stalky.

"Hold on a shake; I know what's coming." McTurk was reading over Beetle's shoulder.

> "That simultaneously take snuff,
> For each to have pretext enough
> And kerchiefwise unfold his sash,
> Which—softness' self—is yet the stuff

(Gummy! What a sentence!)

> To hold fast where a steel chain snaps
> And leave the grand white neck no gash.

(Full stop.)"

"Don't understand a word of it," said Stalky.

"More ass you! Construe," said McTurk. "Those six Johnnies scragged the Czar, and left no evidence. *Actum est* with King."

"He gave me that book, too," said Beetle, licking his lips:

> "There's a great text in Galatians,
> Once you trip on it entails
> Twenty-nine distinct damnations,
> One sure if another fails."

Then irrelevantly:

> "Setebos! Setebos! and Setebos!
> Thinketh he liveth in the cold of the moon."

"He's just come in from dinner," said Dick Four, looking through the window. "Manders minor is with him."

"Safest place for him just now," said Beetle.

"Then you chaps had better clear out," said Stalky politely to the visitors. "'Tisn't fair to mix you up in a study row. Besides, we can't afford to have evidence."

"Are you going to begin at once?" said Aladdin.

"Immediately, if not sooner," said Stalky, and turned out the gas. "Strong, perseverin' man is King. Make him cry 'Capivi.' G'way, Binjamin."

The company retreated to their own neat and spacious study with expectant souls.

"When Stalky blows out his nostrils

like a horse," said Aladdin to the Emperor of China, "he's on the war-path. Wonder what King *will* get."

"Beans," said the Emperor. "Number Five always pays in full."

"Wonder if I ought to take any notice of it officially," said Abanazar, who had just remembered he was a prefect.

"It's none of your business, Pussy. Besides, if you did, we'd have them hostile to *us;* and we shouldn't be able to do any work," said Aladdin. "They've begun already."

Now that West African war-drum had been made to signal across estuaries and deltas. Number Five was forbidden to wake the diabolical engine within earshot of the school. But a deep, devastating drone filled the passages as McTurk and Beetle scientifically rubbed the top. Anon it changed into the blare of trumpets—of savage pursuing trumpets. Then, as McTurk slapped one side, smooth with the blood of ancient sacrifice, the roar broke into short coughing howls such as the wounded gorilla throws in his native forest. These were followed by the wrath of King—three steps at a time, up the staircase, with a dry whir of the gown. Aladdin and company, listening, squeaked with excitement as the door crashed open. King stumbled into the darkness, and cursed those performers by the gods of Balliol and quiet repose.

"Turned out for a week," said Aladdin, holding the study door on the crack. "Key to be brought down to his study in five minutes. 'Brutes! Barbarians! Savages! Children!' He's quite agitated. 'Arrah, Patsy, mind the baby,'" he sang in a whisper as he clung to the door-knob, dancing a noiseless war-dance.

King went downstairs again, and Beetle and McTurk lit the gas to confer with Stalky. But Stalky had vanished.

"Looks like no end of a mess," said Beetle, collecting his books and mathematical instrument case. "A week in the form-rooms isn't any advantage to us."

"Yes, but don't you see that Stalky isn't here, you owl!" said McTurk. "Take down the key, and look sorrowful. King'll only jaw you for half an hour. I'm going to read in the lower form-room."

"But it's always me," mourned Beetle.

"Wait till we see," said McTurk, hopefully. "I don't know any more than you do what Stalky means, but it's something. Get out and draw King's fire. You're used to it."

No sooner had the key turned in the door than the lid of the coal-box, which was also the window-seat, lifted cautiously. It had been a tight fit, even for the lithe Stalky, his head between his knees, and his stomach under his right ear. From a drawer in the table he took a well-worn catapult, a handful of buckshot, and a duplicate key of the study; noiselessly he raised the window and kneeled by it, his face turned to the road, the wind-sloped trees, the dark levels of the Burrows, and the white line of breakers falling nine deep along the Pebble-ridge. Far down the steep-banked Devonshire lane he heard the husky hoot of the carrier's horn. There was a ghost of melody in it, as it might have been the wind in a gin-bottle essaying to sing, "It's a way we have in the army."

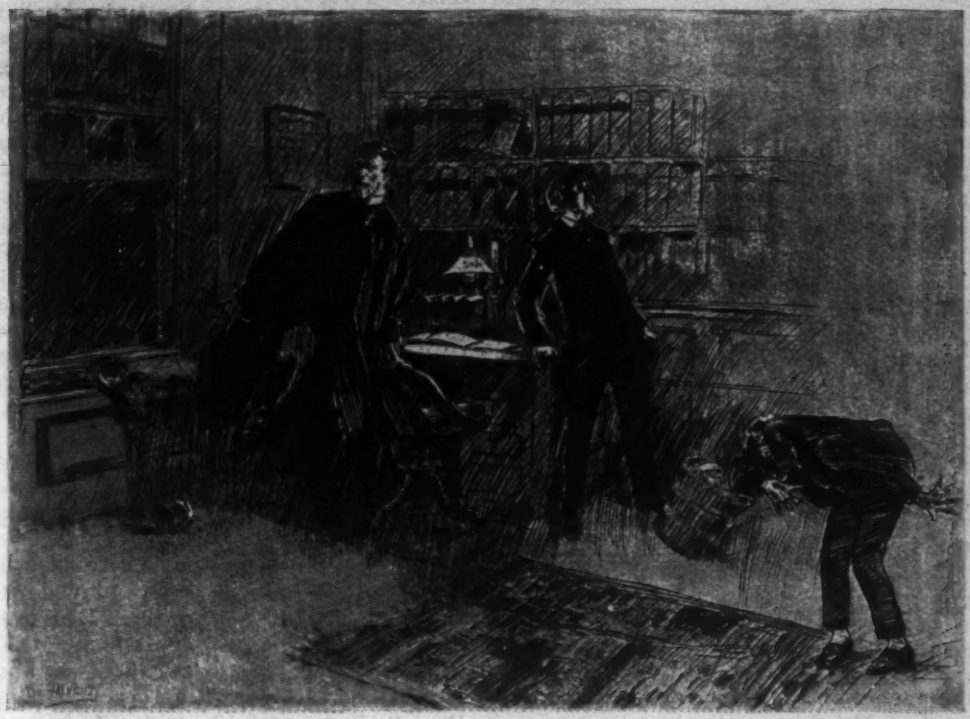
Stalky smiled a tight-lipped smile, and at extreme range opened fire: the old horse half wheeled in the shafts.

"Where be gwaine tu?" hiccoughed Rabbits-Eggs. Another buckshot tore through the rotten canvas tilt with a vicious zipp.

"*Habet*," murmured Stalky, as Rabbits-Eggs swore into the patient night, protesting that he saw the "domned colleger" who was assaulting him.

"And so," King was saying in a high head voice to Beetle, whom he had kept to play with before Manders minor, well knowing that it hurts a Fifth-form boy to be held up to a fag's derision, "and so, Master Beetle, in spite of all our verses, which we are so proud of, when we presume to come into

"AS HE GUIDED THE HOWLING MANDERS TO THE DOOR."



"IT ALL FELL SWIFTLY AS A DREAM."

direct conflict with even so humble a representative of authority as myself, for instance, we are turned out of our studies, are we not?"

"Yes, sir," said Beetle, with a sheepish grin on his lips and murder in his heart. Hope had nearly left him, but he clung to a well-established faith that never was Stalky so dangerous as when he was invisible.

"You are *not* required to criticise, thank you. Turned out of our studies, we are just as if we were no better than little Manders minor. Only inky schoolboys we are, and must be treated as such."

Beetle pricked up his ears, for Rabbits-Eggs was swearing savagely on the road, and some of the language entered at the upper sash. King believed in ventilation. He strode to the window, gowned and majestic, very visible in the gaslight.

"I zee 'un! I zee 'un!" roared Rabbits-Eggs, now that he had found a visible foe —another shot from the darkness above. "Yess, yeou, yeou long-nosed, fower-eyed, gingy-whiskered beggar! Yeu'm tu old for such goin's on. Aie! Poultice yeour nose, I tall 'ee! Poultice yeour long nose!"

Beetle's heart leaped up within him. Somewhere, somehow, he knew Stalky moved behind these manifestations. There was hope and the prospect of revenge. He would embody the suggestion about the nose in deathless verse. King threw up the window, and sternly rebuked Rabbits-Eggs. But the carrier was beyond fear or fawning. He had descended from the cart, and was gasping by the roadside.

It all fell swiftly as a dream. Manders minor raised his hand to his head with a cry, as a jagged flint cannoned on to some fine tree-calf bindings in the bookshelf. Another quoited along the writing-table. Beetle made zealous feint to stop it, and in that endeavor overturned a student's lamp, which dripped, *via* King's papers and some choice books, greasily on to a Persian rug. There was much broken glass on the window-seat; the china basket—McTurk's aversion—cracked to flinders, had dropped her musk plant and its earth over the red rep cushions; Manders minor was bleeding profusely from a cut on the cheek-bone, and King, using strange words, every one of which Beetle treasured, ran forth to find the school-sergeant, that Rabbits-Eggs might be instantly cast into jail.

"Poor chap!" said Beetle, with a false, feigned sympathy. "Let it bleed a little. That'll prevent apoplexy," and he held the blind head skillfully over the table, and

"THREE ABREAST, ARMS LINKED, THE ALADDIN COMPANY ROLLED UP THE BIG CORRIDOR TO PRAYERS. . . ."

the papers on the table, as he guided the howling Manders to the door.

Then did Beetle, alone with the wreckage, return good for evil. How, in that office, a complete set of "Gibbon" was scarred all along the back as by a flint; how so much black and copying ink came to be mingled with Manders's blood on the table-cloth; why the big gum-bottle, unstoppered, had rolled semicircularly across the floor, and in what manner the white china door-knob grew to be painted with yet more of Manders's youthful gore, were matters which Beetle did not explain when the rabid King returned to find him standing politely over the reeking hearth-rug.

"You never told me to go, sir," he said, with the air of Casabianca, and King consigned him to the outer darkness.

But it was to a boot-cupboard under the staircase on the ground floor that he hastened, to loose the mirth that was destroying him. He had not drawn breath for a first whoop of triumph when two hands choked him dumb.

"Go to the dormitory and get me my things. Bring 'em to Number Five lavatory. I'm still in tights," hissed Stalky, sitting on his head. "Don't run. Walk. I'm all right here."

But Beetle staggered into the form-room next door, and delegated his duty to the yet unenlightened McTurk, with an hysterical *precis* of the campaign thus far.

So it was McTurk, of the wooden visage, who brought the clothes from the dormitory while Beetle panted on a form. Then the three buried themselves in Number Five lavatory, turned on all the taps, filled the place with steam, and dropped weeping into the baths, where they pieced out the war.

"*Moi! Je! Ich! Ego!*" gasped Stalky. "I waited till I couldn't hear myself think, while you played the drum. Hid in the coal-locker, and tweaked Rabbits-Eggs, and Rabbits-Eggs rocked King. Wasn't it beautiful? Did you hear the glass?"

"Why, he—he—he," shrieked McTurk, one trembling finger pointed at Beetle.

"Why, I—I—I was through it all," Beetle howled; "in his study, being jawed."

"Oh, my soul!" said Stalky with a yell, disappearing under water.

"The—the glass was nothing. Manders minor's head's cut open. La—la—lamp upset all over the rug. Blood on the books and papers. The gum! The gum! The gum! The ink! The ink! The ink! Oh, My!"

Then Stalky leaped out, all scarlet as he was, and shook Beetle into some sort of coherence; but his tale prostrated them afresh.

"I bunked for the boot-cupboard the second I heard King go downstairs. Beetle tumbled in on top of me. The key's hid behind the loose board. There isn't a shadow of evidence," said Stalky. They were all chanting together.

"And he turned us out himself—himself—him*self!*" This from McTurk. "He can't begin to suspect us. Oh, Stalky, it's the loveliest thing we've ever done."

"Gum! Gum! Dollops of gum!" shouted Beetle, his spectacles gleaming through a sea of lather. "Ink and blood all mixed. I held the little beast's head all over the Latin proses for Monday. Golly, how the oil stunk! And Rabbits-

Eggs told King to poultice his nose! Did you hit Rabbits-Eggs, Stalky?"

"Did I jolly well not? Tweaked him all over. Did you hear him curse? Oh, I shall be sick in a minute if I don't stop."

But dressing was a slow process, because McTurk was obliged to dance when he heard that the musk basket was broken, and, moreover, Beetle retailed all King's language with emendations and purple insets.

"Shockin'!" said Stalky, collapsing in a helpless welter of half-hitched trousers. "So bad, too, for innocent boys like us! Wonder what they'd say at 'St. Winifred's, or the World of School.' By gum! That reminds me we owe the Lower Third one for assaultin' Beetle when he chivied Manders minor. Come on! it's an alibi, Samivel; and besides, if we let 'em off they'll be worse next time."

The Lower Third had set a guard upon their form-room for the space of a full hour, which to a boy is a lifetime. Now they were busy with their Saturday evening businesses—cooking sparrows over the gas with rusty nibs; brewing unholy drinks in gallipots; skinning moles with pocket-knives; attending to paper trays full of silk-worms, or discussing the iniquities of their elders with a freedom, fluency, and point that would have amazed their parents. The blow fell without warning. Stalky upset a form crowded with small boys among their own cooking utensils, McTurk raided the untidy lockers as a terrier digs at a rabbit-hole, while Beetle poured ink upon such heads as he could not appeal to with a Smith's Classical Dictionary. Three brisk minutes accounted for many silk-worms, pet larvæ, French exercises, school caps, half-prepared bones and skulls, and a dozen pots of home-made sloe jam. It was a great wreckage, and the form-room looked as though three conflicting tempests had smitten it.

"Phew!" said Stalky, drawing breath outside the door (amid groans of "Oh, you beastly ca-ads! You think yourselves awful funny," and so forth). "*That's* all right. Never let the sun go down upon your wrath. Rummy little devils, fags, got no notion o' combinin'."

"Six of 'em sat on my head when I went in after Manders minor," said Beetle. "I warned 'em what they'd get, though."

"Yes, but they don't combine as *we* used to do. 'Member when Blundell major came in and tried to slap McTurk's head for cheek at call-over? That was our second term."

"Your second, my first," said Beetle. "My hat! wasn't Blundell major wrathy! I got hold of his legs and hung on, like Billy O!"

"Well, we tore the clothes off his back," said McTurk, reflectively. "We fought him from just after tea till prep. 'Member he tried to say it was a joke, and we half slew him! Never tried to touch any one of us again."

"Any three o' those little beasts could have tackled us in the same way. If they only kept it up," said Stalky.

"Lucky job for us they don't," said Beetle, as they strolled along the corridor.

"Everybody paid in full—beautiful feelin'," said McTurk, absently. "Don't think we'd better say much about King, though, do you, Stalky?"

"Not *much*. Our line is injured innocence, of course—same as when the Sergeant reported us on suspicion of smoking in the Bunkers. If I hadn't thought of buyin' the pepper and spillin' it all over our clothes, he'd have smelt us. King was gha-astly facetious about that. Called us bird-stuffers in form for a week."

"Ah, King hates the Natural History Society because little Hartopp is president. Mustn't do anything in the Coll. without glorifyin' King," said McTurk. "But he must be a putrid ass, you know, to suppose at our time o' life we'd go out and stuff birds like fags."

"Poor old King!" said Beetle. "He's awf'ly unpopular in common-room, and they'll chaff his head off about Rabbits-Eggs. Golly! How lovely! How beautiful! How holy! But you should have seen his face when the first rock came in! *And* the earth from the basket!"

So they were all stricken helpless for five minutes.

They repaired at last to Abanazar's study, and were received reverently.

"What's the matter?" said Stalky, quick to realize new atmospheres.

"You know jolly well," said Abanazar. "You'll be expelled if you get caught. King is a gibbering maniac."

"Who? Which? What? Expelled for how? We only played the war-drum. Got turned out for that already."

"Do you chaps mean to say you didn't make Rabbits-Eggs drunk and bribe him to rock King's rooms?"

"Bribe him? No, that I'll swear we didn't," said Stalky, with a relieved heart, for he loved not to tell lies. "What a low mind you've got, Pussy! We've been down having a bath. Did Rabbits-Eggs

rock King? Strong, perseverin' man, King. Shockin'!"

"Awf'ly. King's frothing at the mouth. There's bell for prayers. Come on."

"Wait a sec," said Stalky, continuing the conversation in a loud and cheerful voice, as they descended the stairs. "What did Rabbits-Eggs rock King for?"

"I know," said Beetle, as they passed King's open door. "I was in his study."

"Hush, you ass!" hissed the Emperor of China.

"Oh, he's gone down to prayers," said Beetle, watching the shadow of the housemaster on the wall. "Rabbits-Eggs was only a bit drunk, swearin' at his horse, and King jawed him through the window, and then, of course, he rocked King."

"Do you mean to say," said Stalky, "that King began it?"

King was behind them, and every well-weighed word went up the staircase like an arrow. "I can only swear," said Beetle, "that King cursed like a bargee. Simply disgustin'. I'm goin' to write to my father about it."

"Better report it to Mason," suggested Stalky. "He knows our tender consciences. Hold on a shake. I've got to tie my bootlace."

The other study hurried forward. They did not wish to be dragged into stage asides of this nature. So it was left to McTurk to sum up the situation beneath the guns of the enemy.

"You see," said the Irishman, hanging on the banister, "he begins by bullying little chaps; then he bullies the big chaps; then he bullies some one who isn't connected with the college, and then he catches it. Serves him jolly well right. . . . I beg your pardon, sir. I didn't see you were coming down the staircase."

The black gown tore past like a thunderstorm, and in its wake, three abreast, arms linked, the Aladdin company rolled up the big corridor to prayers, singing with most innocent intention:

"Arrah, Patsy, mind the baby! Arrah, Patsy, mind the child!
Wrap him up in an overcoat, he's surely goin' wild!
Arrah, Patsy, mind the baby; just ye mind the child awhile!
He'll kick an' bite an' cry all night! Arrah, Patsy, mind the child!"

The PERSONS of the Story as they appear in PART II.

II.

THAT very Infant who told the story of the capture of Boh Na Ghee to Eustace Cleaver, novelist, inherited an estateful baronetcy, with vast revenues, resigned the service, and became a landholder, while his mother stood guard over him to see that he married the right girl. But, new to his position, he presented the local volunteers with a full-sized magazine-rifle range, two miles long, across the heart of his estate, and the surrounding families, who lived in savage seclusion among woods full of pheasants, regarded him as an erring maniac. The noise of the firing

disturbed their poultry, and Infant was cast out from the society of J. P.'s and decent men till such time as a daughter of the county might lure him back to right thinking. He took his revenge by filling the house with choice selections of old schoolmates home on leave—affable detrimentals, at whom the bicycle-riding maidens of the surrounding families were allowed to look from afar. I knew when a troop-ship was in port by the Infant's invitations. Sometimes he would produce old friends of equal seniority; at others, young and blushing giants whom I had left small fags far down in the Lower Second; and to these Infant and the elders expounded the whole duty of man in the army.

"I've had to cut the service," said the Infant; "but that's no reason why my vast stores of experience should be lost to posterity." He was just thirty, and in that same summer an imperious wire drew me to his baronial castle: "Got good haul; ex Tamar. Come along."

It was an unusually good haul, arranged with a single eye to my benefit. There was a baldish, broken-down captain of native infantry, shivering with ague behind an indomitable red nose—and they called him Captain Dickson. There was another captain, also of native infantry, with a fair mustache; his face was like white glass, and his hands were fragile, but he answered joyfully to the cry of Tertius. There was an enormously big and well-kept man, who had evidently not campaigned for years, clean-shaved, soft-voiced, and catlike, but still Abanazar for all that he adorned the Indian Political Service; and there was a lean Irishman, his face tanned blue-black with the suns of the Telegraph Department. Luckily the baize doors of the bachelors' wing fitted tight, for we dressed promiscuously in the corridor or in each other's rooms, talking, calling, shouting, and anon waltzing by pairs to songs of Dick Four's own devising.

There were sixty years of mixed work to be sifted out between us, and since we had met one another from time to time in the quick scene-shifting of India—a dinner, camp, or a race-meeting here; a dak-bungalow or railway station up country somewhere else—we had never quite lost touch. Infant sat on the banisters, hungrily and enviously drinking it in. He enjoyed his baronetcy, but his heart yearned for the old days.

It was a cheerful babel of matters personal, provincial, and imperial, pieces of old call-over lists, and new policies, cut short by the roar of a Burmese gong, and we went down not less than a quarter of a mile of stairs to meet Infant's mother, who had known us all in our school-days and greeted us as if those had ended a week ago. But it was fifteen years since, with tears of laughter, she had lent me a

"THERE WERE SIXTY YEARS OF MIXED WORK TO BE SIFTED OUT BETWEEN US, . . ."

gray princess-skirt for amateur theatricals.

That was a dinner from the "Arabian Nights," served in an eighty-foot hall full of ancestors and pots of flowering roses, and, what was more impressive, heated by steam. When it was ended and the little mother in blue velvet and silver had gone away—("You boys want to talk, so I shall say good-night now")—we gathered about an apple-wood fire, in a gigantic polished steel grate, under a mantelpiece ten feet high, and the Infant compassed us about with curious *liqueurs* and that kind of cigarette which serves best to introduce your own pipe.

"Oh, bliss!" grunted Dick Four from a sofa, where he had been packed with a rug over him. "First time I've been warm since I came home."

We were all nearly on top the fire, except Infant, who had been long enough at home to take exercise when he felt chilled. This is a grisly diversion, but much affected by the English of the Island.

"If you say a word about cold tubs and brisk walks," drawled McTurk, "I'll kill you, Infant. I've got a liver, too. 'Member when we used to think it a treat to turn out of our beds on a Sunday morning—thermometer fifty-seven degrees if it was summer—and bathe off the Pebble-ridge? Ugh!"

"Thing I don't understand," said Tertius, "was the way we chaps used to go down into the lavatories, boil ourselves pink, and then come up with all our pores open into a young snow storm or a black frost. Yet none of our chaps died, that I can remember."

"SO I HAMMERED ON THE GATE AND NIPPED IN, . . ."

"Talkin' of baths," said McTurk, with a chuckle, "'member our bath in Number Five, Beetle, the night Rabbits-Eggs rocked King? What wouldn't I give to see old Stalky now! He is the only one of the two Studies not here."

"Stalky is the great man of his century," said Dick Four.

"How d'you know?" I asked.

"How do I know?" said Dick Four, scornfully. "If you've ever been through a tight place with Stalky you wouldn't ask."

"I haven't seen him since the camp at Pindi in '87," I said. "He was goin'

strong then—about seven feet high and four feet through."

"Adequate chap. Infernally adequate," said Tertius, pulling his mustache and staring into the fire.

"Got very near court-martialed and broke in Egypt in '84," the Infant volunteered. "I went out in the same trooper with him—raw as he was. Only *I* showed it, and Stalky didn't."

"What was the trouble?" said McTurk, reaching forward absently to twitch a dress-tie into position.

"Oh, nothing. His colonel weakly trusted him to take twenty Tommies out to wash, or groom camels, or something at the back of Suakin, and Stalky got embroiled with Fuzzies five miles in the interior. Conducted a masterly retreat and wiped up eight of 'em. He knew jolly well he'd no right to go out so far, so he took the initiative and pitched in a letter to his colonel, who was frothing at the mouth, complaining of the 'paucity of support accorded to him in his operations.' Gad, it might have been one fat brigadier slangin' another! Then he went into the Staff Corps."

"That — is — entirely — Stalky," said Abanazar from his armchair.

"*You've* come across him, too?" I said.

"Oh, yes," he replied in his softest tones. "I was at the tail of that—that epic. Don't you chaps know?"

We did not—Infant, McTurk, and I; and we called for information very politely.

"'Twasn't anything," said Tertius. "We got into a mess up in the Khye-Kheen Hills a couple o' years ago, and Stalky pulled us through. That's all."

McTurk gazed at Tertius with all an Irishman's contempt for the tongue-tied Saxon.

"Heavens!" he said. "And it's *you* and your likes govern Ireland. Tertius, aren't you ashamed?"

"Well, I can't tell a yarn. I can chip in when the other fellow starts *buhking*. Ask *him*." He pointed to Dick Four, whose nose gleamed scornfully over the rug.

"I knew you wouldn't," said Dick Four. "Give me a whisky and soda. I've been drinking lemonade squash and ammoniated quinine while you chaps were bathin' in champagne, and my head's singin' like a top."

He wiped his ragged mustache above the drink; and, with his teeth chattering in his head, began:

"You know the Khye-Kheen-Malôt expedition, when we scared the souls out of 'em with a field force they daren't fight against? Well, both tribes—there was a coalition against us—came in without firing a shot; and a lot of hairy villains, who had no more power over their men than I had, promised and vowed all sorts of things. On that very slender evidence, Pussy dear—"

"I was at Simla," said Abanazar, hastily.

"Never mind, you're tarred with the same brush. On the strength of those tuppenny-ha'penny treaties, your asses of Politicals reported the country pacified, and the Government, being a fool, as usual, began road-makin'—dependin' on local supply for labor. 'Member *that*, Pussy? Rest of our chaps who'd had no look in

"TO MAKE US QUITE COMFY, STALKY TOOK US UP TO THE WATCH-TOWER TO SEE POOR EVERETT'S BODY, LYIN' IN A FOOT O' DRIFTED SNOW."

during the campaign didn't think there'd be any more of it, and were anxious to get back to India. But I'd been in two of these little rows before, and I had my suspicions. I engineered myself, *summo ingenio*, into command of a road patrol—no shovelin', only marching up and down genteelly with a guard. They'd withdrawn all the troops they could, but I nucleused about forty Pathans, recruits chiefly, of my regiment, and sat tight at the base-camp while the road parties went to work, as per Political survey."

"Had some rippin' sing-songs in camp, too," said Tertius.

"My pup"—thus did Dick Four refer to his subaltern—"was a pious little beast. He didn't like the sing-songs, and *so* he went down with pneumonia. I rootled round the camp, and found Tertius gassing about as a D.A.Q.M.G., which, any one knows, he isn't cut out for. There were six or eight of the old school at base-camp (we're always in force for a frontier row), but I'd heard of Tertius as a steady old hack, and I told him he had to shake off his D.A.Q.M.G. breeches and help *me*. Tertius volunteered like a shot, and we settled it with the authorities, and out we went—forty Pathans, Tertius, and me, looking up the road parties. Macnamara's —'member old Mac, the Sapper, who played the fiddle so horribly at Umballa? —Mac's party was the last but one. The last was Stalky's. He was at the head of the road with some of his pet Sikhs. Mac said he believed he was all right."

"Stalky *is* a Sikh," said Tertius. "Takes his men to pray at the Durbar Sahib at Amritzar, regularly as clockwork, when he can."

"Don't interrupt, Tertius. It was about forty miles beyond Mac's before I found him; and my men pointed out gently, but firmly, that the country was risin'. What kind o' country, Beetle? Well, *I'm* no word-painter, thank goodness, but *you* might call it a hellish country! When we weren't up to our necks in snow, we were rolling down the khud. The well-disposed inhabitants, who were to supply labor for the road-making (don't forget that, Pussy dear), sat behind rocks and took pot-shots at us. Old, old story. We all legged it in search of Stalky. I had a feeling that he'd be in good cover, and about dusk we found him and his road party, as snug as a bug in a rug, in an old Malôt stone fort, with a watch-tower at one corner. It overhung the road they had blasted out of the cliff fifty feet below; and under the road things went down pretty sheer, for five or six hundred feet, into a gorge about half a mile wide and two or three miles long. There were chaps on the other side of the gorge scientifically gettin' our range. So I hammered on the gate and nipped in, and tripped over Stalky in a greasy, bloody old poshteen, squatting on the ground, eating with his men. I'd only seen him for half a minute about three months before, but I might have met him yesterday. He waved his hand all serene.

"'Hullo, Aladdin! Hullo, Emperor!' he said. 'You're just in time for the performance.'

"I saw his Sikhs looked a bit battered. 'Where's your command? Where's your subaltern?' I said.

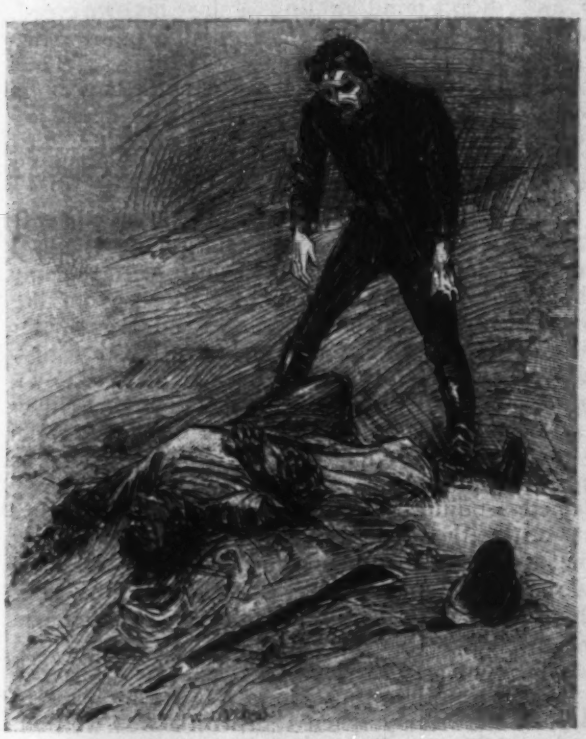
"'Here—all there is of it,' said Stalky. 'If you want young Everett, he's dead, and his body 's in the watch-tower. They rushed our road party last week, and got him and seven men. We've been besieged for five days. I suppose they let you through to make sure of you. The whole country's up. Strikes me you've walked into a first-class trap.' He grinned, but neither Tertius nor I could see where the deuce the fun lay. We hadn't any grub for our men, and Stalky had only four days' whack for his. That came of dependin' upon your asinine Politicals, Pussy dear, who told us the inhabitants were friendly.

"To make us *quite* comfy, Stalky took us up to the watch-tower to see poor Everett's body, lyin' in a foot o' drifted snow. It looked like a girl of fifteen—not a hair on the little fellow's face. He'd been shot through the temple, but the Malôts had left their mark on him. Stalky unbuttoned the tunic, and showed it to us—a rummy sickle-shaped cut on the chest. 'Member the snow all white on his eyebrows, Tertius? 'Member when Stalky moved the lamp and it looked as if he was alive?"

"Ye-es," said Tertius, with a shudder. "'Member the beastly look on Stalky's face, though, with his nostrils all blown out, same as he used to look when he was bullyin' a fag? That was a lovely evening."

"We held a sort of council of war up there over Everett's body. Stalky said the Malôts and Khye-Kheens were up together, havin' sunk their blood feuds to settle us. The chaps we'd seen across the gorge were Khye-Kheens. It was about half a mile from them to us as a bullet

flies, and they'd made a line of sungars under the brow of the hill to sleep in and starve us out. The Malôts, he said, were in front of us promiscuous. There wasn't good cover behind the fort, or they'd have been there, too. Stalky didn't mind the Malôts half as much as he did the Khye-Kheens. Said the Malôts were treacherous curs. What I couldn't understand was, why in the world the two gangs didn't join in and rush us. There must have been at least five hundred of 'em. Stalky said they didn't trust each other very well, because they were ancestral enemies when they were at home, and the only time they'd tried rushin' he'd hove a couple of blasting charges among 'em, and that had sickened 'em a bit.



"SO STALKY ABOLISHED HIM QUIETLY, . . ."

"It was dark by the time we finished, and Stalky, always serene, said: 'You command now. I don't suppose you mind my taking any action I may consider necessary to reprovision the fort?' I said, 'Of course not,' and then the lamp blew out. So Tertius and I had to climb down the tower steps (we didn't want to stay with Everett) and got back to our men. Stalky had gone off—to count the stores, I supposed. Anyhow, Tertius and I sat up in case of a rush (they were plugging at us pretty generally, you know), relieving each other till the mornin'.

"Mornin' came. No Stalky. Not a sign of him. I took counsel with his senior native officer—a grand, white-whiskered old chap—Rutton Singh, from Jullunder way. He only grinned, and said it was all right. Stalky had been out of the fort twice before, somewhere or other, accordin' to him. He said Stalky 'ud come back unchipped, and gave me to understand that Stalky was an invulnerable *Guru* of sorts. All the same, I put the whole command on half rations, and set 'em pickin' out loop-holes.

"About noon there was no end of a snow-storm, and the enemy stopped firing. We replied gingerly, because we were awfully short of ammunition. Don't suppose we fired five shots an hour, but we generally got our man. Well, while I was talking with Rutton Singh I saw Stalky coming down from the watch-tower, rather puffy about the eyes, his poshteen coated with claret-colored ice.

"'No trustin' these snow-storms,' he said. 'Nip out quick and snaffle what you can get. There's a certain amount of friction between the Khye-Kheens and the Malôts just now.'

"I turned Tertius out with twenty Pathans, and they bucked about in the snow for a while till they came on to a sort of camp about eight hundred yards away, with only a few men in charge and half a dozen sheep by the fire. They finished off the men, and snaffled the sheep and as much grain as they could carry, and came back. No one fired a shot at 'em. There didn't seem to be anybody about, but the snow was falling pretty thick.

"'That's good enough,' said Stalky when we got dinner ready and he was chewin' mutton kababs off a cleanin' rod. 'No sense riskin' men. They're holding a pow-wow between the Khye-Kheens and the Malôts at the head of the gorge. I don't think these so-called coalitions are much good.'

"Do you know what that maniac had done? Tertius and I shook it out of him by installments. There was an underground granary cellar-room below the watch-tower, and in blasting the road Stalky had blown a hole into one side of

it. Being no one else *but* Stalky, he'd kept the hole open for his own ends; and laid poor Everett's body slap over the well of the stairs that led down to it from the watch-tower. He'd had to move and replace the corpse every time he used the passage. The Sikhs wouldn't go near the place, of course. Well, he'd got out of this hole, and dropped on to the road. Then, in the night *and* a howling snow-storm, he'd dropped over the edge of the khud, made his way down to the bottom of the gorge, forded the nullah, which was half frozen, climbed up on the other side along a track he'd discovered, and come out on the right flank of the Khye-Kheens. He had then—listen to this!—crossed over a ridge that paralleled their rear, walked half a mile behind that, and come out on the left of their line where the gorge gets shallow and where there was a regular track between the Malôt and the Khye-Kheen camps. That was about two in the morning, and, as it turned out, a man spotted him—a Khye-Kheen. So Stalky abolished him quietly, and left him —*with* the Malôt mark on his chest same as Everett had.

"'I was just as economical as I could be,' said Stalky. 'If he'd shouted I should have been slain. I'd never had to do that kind of thing but once before, and that was the first time I tried that path. It's perfectly practicable for infantry, you know.'

"'What about your first man?' I said.

"'Oh, that was the night after they killed Everett, and I went out lookin' for a line of retreat for my men. I abolished him—*privatim*—scragged him. But on thinkin' it over it occurred to me that if I could find the body (I'd hove it down some rocks) I might decorate it with the Malôt mark and leave it to the Khye-Kheens to draw inferences. So I went out again the next night and did. The Khye-Kheens were shocked at the Malôts perpetratin' these dastardly outrages after they'd sworn to sink all blood feuds. I lay up behind their sungars early this morning and watched 'em. They all went to confer about it at the head of the gorge. Awf'ly annoyed they are. Don't wonder.' You know the way Stalky drops out his words, one by one.

"Wonderful!" said the Infant, explosively, as the full depth of the strategy dawned on him.

"Dear-r man!" said McTurk, purring rapturously.

"Stalky stalked," said Tertius. "That's all there is to it."

"No, he didn't," said Dick Four. "Don't you remember how he insisted that he had only applied his luck? Don't you remember how Rutton Singh grabbed his boots and groveled in the snow, and how our men shouted?"

"None of our Pathans believed that was luck," said Tertius. "They swore Stalky ought to have been born a Pathan, and—'member we nearly had a row in the fort when Rutton Singh said Stalky was a Sikh? Gad, how furious the old chap was with my Jemadar! But Stalky just waggled his finger and they shut up.

"Old Rutton Singh's sword was half out, though, and he swore he'd cremate every Khye-Kheen and Malôt he killed. That made the Jemadar pretty wild, because he didn't mind fighting against his own creed, but he wasn't going to crab a fellow Mussulman's chances of Paradise. Then Stalky jabbered Pushtu and Punjabi in alternate streaks. Where the deuce did he pick up his Pushtu from, Beetle?"

"Never mind his language, Dick," said I. "Give us the gist of it."

"I flatter myself I can address the wily Pathan on occasion, but, hang it all, I can't make puns in Pushtu, or top off my arguments with a smutty story, as he did. He played on those two old dogs o' war like a—like a concertina. Stalky said—and the other two backed up his knowledge of Oriental nature—that the Khye-Kheens and the Malôts between 'em would organize a combined attack on us that night, as a proof of good faith. They wouldn't drive it home, though, because neither side would trust the other on account, as Rutton Singh put it, of the little accidents. Stalky's notion was to crawl out at dusk with his Sikhs, manœuver 'em along this ungodly goat track that he'd found, to the back of the Khye-Kheen position, and then lob in a few long shots at the Malôts when the attack was well on. 'That'll divert their minds and help to agitate 'em,' he said. 'Then you chaps can come out and sweep up the pieces, and we'll rendezvous at the head of the gorge. After that, I move we get back to Mac's camp and have something to eat."

"*You* were commandin'?" the Infant suggested.

"I was about three months senior to Stalky, and two months Tertius's senior," Dick Four replied. "*But* we were all from the same old school. I should say ours was the only affair on record where some one wasn't jealous of some one else."

"SAW THE WHOLE CREW WHIRL OFF, FIGHTIN' AND STABBIN' AND SWEARIN' IN A BLINDING SNOW-STORM."

"*We* weren't," Tertius broke in, "but there was another row between Gul Sher Khan and Rutton Singh. Our Jemadar said—he was quite right—that no Sikh living could stalk worth anything; and that Koran Sahib had better take out the Pathans, who understood that kind of mountain work. Rutton Singh said that Koran Sahib jolly well knew every Pathan was a born deserter, and every Sikh was a gentleman, even if he couldn't crawl on his belly. Stalky struck in with some woman's proverb or other, that had the effect of doublin' both men up with a grin. He said the Sikhs and the Pathans could settle their claims on the Khye-Kheens and Malôts later on, but he was going to take his Sikhs along for this mountain-climbing job, because Sikhs could shoot. They can, too; give 'em a mule load of ammunition apiece, and they're perfectly happy."

"And out he gat," said Dick Four. "As soon as it was dark, and he'd had a bit of a snooze, him and thirty Sikhs went down through the staircase in the tower, every mother's son of 'em salutin' little Everett where it stood propped up against the wall. The last I heard him say was, 'Kubbadar! tumbleinga!' * and they tumbleingaed over the black edge of nothing. Close upon 9 P.M. the combined attack developed, Khye-Kheens across the valley, and Malôts in front of us, pluggin' at long range and yellin' to each other to come along and cut our infidel throats. Then they skirmished up to the gate, and began the old game of calling our Pathans renegades, and invitin' 'em to join the holy war. One of our men, a young fellow from Dera Ismail, jumped on the wall to slang 'em back, and jumped down, blubbing like a child. He'd been hit smack in the middle of the hand. Never saw a man yet who could stand a hit in the hand without weepin' bitterly. It tickles up all the nerves. So Tertius took his rifle and smote the others on the head to keep them quiet at the loopholes. The dear children wanted to open the gate and go in at 'em generally, but that didn't suit our book.

"At last, near midnight, I heard the wop, wop, wop, of Stalky's Martinis across the valley, and some general cursing among the Malôts, whose main body was

* "Look out; you'll fall!"

hid from us by a fold in the hillside. Stalky was brownin' 'em at a great rate, and very naturally they turned half right and began to blaze at their faithless allies, the Khye-Kheens—regular volley firin'. In less than ten minutes after Stalky opened the diversion they were going it hammer and tongs, both sides the valley. Then our recruits began to dance on one leg with excitement. But we wouldn't join the ball so long as the ruffians outside were doing our work for us. We sat tight till the dawn, thinkin' how deuced well armed they were, and how they were wastin' their ammunition. When we could see, the valley was rather a mixed-up affair. The Khye-Kheens had streamed out of their sungars above the gorge to chastise the Malôts, and Stalky—I was watching him through my glasses—had slipped in behind 'em. Very good. The Khye-Kheens had to leg it along the hillside up to where the gorge got shallow and they could cross over to the Malôts, who were awfully cheered to see the Khye-Kheens taken in the rear.

"Then it occurred to me to comfort the Khye-Kheens. So I turned out the whole command, and we advanced *a la pas de charge*, doublin' up what, for the sake of argument, we'll call the Malôts' left flank. Even then, if they'd sunk their differences, they could have eaten us alive; but they'd been firin' at each other half the night, and they went on firin'. Queerest thing you ever saw in your born days! As soon as our men doubled up to the Malôts, they'd blaze at the Khye-Kheens more zealously than ever, to show they were on our side; run up the valley a few hundred yards, and halt to fire again. The moment Stalky saw our game he duplicated it his side the gorge; and, by Jove! the Khye-Kheens did just the same thing."

"Yes, but," said Tertius, "you've forgot him playin' 'Arrah, Patsy, mind the baby' on the bugle to hurry us up."

"Did he?" roared McTurk. Somehow we all began to sing it, and there was an interruption.

"*Rather*," said Tertius, when we were quiet. "No one of the Aladdin company could forget that tune. Yes, he played Patsy'—Go on, Dick."

"Finally," said Dick Four, "we drove both mobs into each other's arms on a bit of level land at the head of the valley, and saw the whole crew whirl off, fightin' and stabbin' and swearin' in a blinding snowstorm. They were a heavy, hairy lot, and we didn't follow 'em.

"Stalky had captured one prisoner—an old pensioned Sepoy of twenty-five years' service, who produced his discharge—an awf'ly sportin' old card. He had been tryin' to make 'em rush us early in the day. He was sulky—angry with his own side for their cowardice, and Rutton Singh wanted to bayonet him—Sikhs don't understand fightin' against the Government after you've served it honestly—but Stalky rescued him, and froze on to him tight, with ulterior motives, I believe. When we got back to the fort, we buried young Everett—Stalky wouldn't hear of blowin' up the place—and bunked. We'd only lost ten men, all told."

"Only ten, out of seventy. How did you lose 'em?" I asked.

"Oh, there was a rush on the fort early in the night, and a few Malôts got over the gate. It was rather a tight thing for a minute or two, but the recruits took it beautifully. Lucky job we hadn't any badly wounded men to carry, because we had forty miles to Macnamara's camp. By Jove, how we legged it! Half way in, old Rutton Singh collapsed, so we slung him across four rifles and Stalky's overcoat; and Stalky, his prisoner, and a couple of Sikhs were his bearers. After that I went to sleep. You *can*, you know, on the march, when your legs get properly numbed. Mac swears we *all* marched into his camp snoring and dropped where we halted. His men lugged us into the tents like gram-bags. I remember wakin' up and seeing Stalky asleep with his head on old Rutton Singh's chest. *He* slept twenty-four hours. I only slept seventeen, but then I was coming down with dysentery."

"Coming down? What rot! He had it on him before we joined Stalky in the fort," said Tertius.

"Well! *You* needn't talk. You hove your sword at Macnamara and demanded a drumhead court-martial every time you saw him. The only thing that soothed you was putting you under arrest every half hour. You were off your head for three days."

"Don't remember a word of it," said Tertius, placidly. "I remember my orderly giving me milk, though."

"How did Stalky come out?" McTurk demanded, puffing hard over his pipe.

"Stalky? Like a serene Brahmini bull. Poor old Mac was at his Royal Engineers' wits' end to know what to do. You see I was putrid with dysentery, Tertius was ravin', half the men had frost-bite, and Macnamara's orders were to break camp

and come in before winter. So Stalky, who hadn't turned a hair, took half his supplies to save him the bother o' luggin' 'em back to the plains, and all the ammunition he could get at, and, *consilio et auxilio* Rutton Singhi, tramped back to his fort with all his Sikhs and his precious prisoner, and a lot of dissolute hangers-on that he and the prisoner had seduced into service. Had sixty men of sorts—and his brazen cheek. Mac nearly wept with joy when he went. You see there weren't any explicit orders to Stalky to come in before the passes were blocked: Mac is a great man for orders, and Stalky's a great man for orders—when they suit his book. He'd taken every firebrand and camp devil and professional mutineer with him."

"Told me he was goin' to the Engadine," said Tertius. "Sat on my cot smokin' a cigarette, and makin' me laugh till I cried. Macnamara bundled the whole lot of us down to the plains next day. We were a walkin' hospital."

"Stalky told me that Macnamara was a simple godsend to him," said Dick Four. "He blarneyed that virtuous old Sapper out of his boots. I used to see him in Mac's tent listenin' to Mac playin' the fiddle, and, between the pieces, wheedlin' Mac out of picks and shovels and dynamite cartridges hand over fist. Well, that was the last we saw of Stalky. A week or so later the passes were shut with snow, and I don't think Stalky wanted to be found particularly just then."

"He didn't," said the fair and fat Abanazar. "He didn't. Ho, ho!"

Dick Four threw up his thin, dry hand with the blue veins at the back of it. "Hold on a minute, Pussy; I'll let you in at the proper time. I went down to my regiment, and that spring, five months later, I got off with a couple of companies on detachment: nominally to look after some friends of ours across the border; actually, of course, to recruit. It was a bit unfortunate, because an ass of a young Naick carried a frivolous blood feud he'd inherited from his aunt into those hills, and the local gentry wouldn't

". . . TRAMPED BACK TO HIS FORT, WITH ALL HIS SIKHS AND HIS PRECIOUS PRISONER, . . ."

volunteer into my corps. Of course, the Naick had taken short leave to manage the business; that was all regular enough; *but* he'd stalked my pet orderly's uncle. It was an infernal shame, because I knew Harris of the Ghuznees would be covering that ground three months later, and he'd snaffle all the chaps I had my eyes on. Everybody was down on the Naick, because they felt he ought to have had the decency to postpone his—his disgustful amours till our companies were full strength.

"Still the beast had a certain amount of professional feeling left. He sent one of his aunt's clan by night to tell me that, if I'd take safeguard, he'd put me on to a batch of beauties. I nipped over the border like a shot, and about ten miles the other side, in a nullah, my rapparee-in-charge showed me about seventy men variously armed, but standing up like a Queen's company. Then one of 'em stepped out and lugged round an old bugle, just like—who's the man?—Bancroft, ain't it?—feeling for his eyeglass in a farce, and played 'Arrah, Patsy, mind the baby. Arrah, Patsy, mind'— that was as far as he could get."

That, also, was as far as Dick Four could get, because we had to sing the old song through twice, again and once more, and subsequently, in order to repeat it.

"He explained that if I knew the rest of the song he had a note for me from the man the song belonged to. Whereupon, my children, I finished that old tune on that bugle, and *this* is what I got. I knew you'd like to look at it. Don't grab." (We were all struggling for a sight of the well-known unformed handwriting.) "I'll read it aloud.

"'FORT EVERETT, *February* 19.

"'DEAR DICK, OR TERTIUS: The bearer of this is in charge of seventy-five recruits, all pukka devils, but desirous of leading new lives. They have been slightly polished, and after being boiled may shape well. I want you to give thirty of them to my adjutant, who will need men this spring. The rest you can keep. You will be interested to learn that I have extended my road to the end of the Malôt country. All headmen and priests concerned in last September's affair worked one month each, supplying road metal from their own houses. Everett's grave is covered by a forty-foot mound, which should serve well as a base for future triangulations. Ruttun Singh sends his best salaams. I am making some treaties, and have given my prisoner—who also sends his salaams—local rank of Khan Bahadur.

"'A. L. COCKRAN.'"

"Well, that was all," said Dick Four, when the roaring, the shouting, the laughter, and, I think, almost the tears, had subsided. "I chaperoned the gang across the border as quick as I could. They were rather homesick, but they cheered up when they recognized some of my chaps, who had been in the Khye-Kheen row, and they made a rippin' good lot. It's rather more than three hundred miles from Fort Everett to where I picked 'em up. Now, Pussy, tell 'em the latter end o' Stalky as you saw it."

Abanazar laughed a little nervous, misleading, official laugh.

"Oh, it wasn't much. I was at Simla in the spring, when our Stalky, out of his snows, began corresponding direct with the Government."

"After the manner of a king," suggested Dick Four.

"My turn now, Dick. He'd done a whole lot of things he shouldn't have done, and constructively pledged the Government to all sorts of action."

"Pledged the State's ticker, eh?" said McTurk, with a nod to me.

"About that; but the embarrassin' part was that it was all so thunderin' convenient, so well reasoned, don't you know? Came in as pat as if he'd had access to all sorts of information—which he couldn't, of course."

"Pooh!" said Tertius, "I back Stalky against the Foreign Office any day."

"He'd done pretty nearly everything he could think of, except strikin' coins in his own image and superscription, all under cover of buildin' this infernal road and bein' blocked by the snow. His report was simply amazin'. Von Lennaert tore his hair over it at first, and then he gasped, 'Who the dooce is this unknown Warren Hastings? He must be slain. He must be slain officially! The Viceroy'll never stand it. It's unheard of. He must be slain by his Excellency in person. Order him up here and pitch in a stinger.' Well, I sent him no end of an official stinger, and I pitched in an unofficial telegram at the same time."

"You!" This with amazement from the Infant, for Abanazar resembled nothing so much as a fluffy Persian cat.

"Yes—me," said Abanazar. "'Twasn't much, but after what you've said, Dicky, it was rather a coincidence, because I wired:

"'Aladdin now has got his wife,
Your Emperor is appeased.
I think you'd better come to life:
We hope you've all been pleased.'

"Funny how that old song came up in my head. That was fairly non-committal

and encouragin'. The only flaw was that his Emperor wasn't appeased by very long chalks. Stalky extricated himself from his mountain fastnesses and loafed up to Simla at his leisure, to be offered up on the horns of the altar."

"But," I began, "surely the C.-in-C. is the proper—"

"His Excellency had an idea that if he blew up one single junior captain—same as King used to blow us up—he was holdin' the reins of empire, and, of course, as long as he had that idea, Von Lennaert encouraged him. I'm not sure Von Lennaert didn't put that notion into his head."

"They've changed the breed, then, since my time," I said.

"P'r'aps. Stalky was sent up for his wiggin' like a little bad boy. I've reason to believe that His Excellency's hair stood on end. He walked into Stalky for one hour—Stalky at attention in the middle of the floor, and (so he vowed) Von Lennaert pretending to soothe down His Excellency's topknot in dumb show in the background. Stalky didn't dare to look up, or he'd have laughed."

"Now, wherefore was Stalky not broken publicly?" said the Infant, with a large and luminous leer.

"Ah, wherefore?" said Abanazar. "To give him a chance to retrieve his blasted career, and not to break his father's heart. Stalky hadn't a father, but that didn't matter. He behaved like a —like the Sanawas Orphan Asylum, and His Excellency graciously spared him. Then he came round to my office and sat opposite me for ten minutes, puffing out his nostrils. Then he said, 'Pussy, if I thought that basket-hanger—'"

"Hah! He remembered *that*," said McTurk.

"'That two-anna basket-hanger governed India, I swear I'd become a naturalized Muscovite to-morrow. I'm a *femme incomprise*. This thing's broken my heart. It'll take six months' shootin' leave in India to mend it. Think I can get it, Pussy?"

"He got it in about three minutes and a half, and seventeen days later he was back in the arms of Rutton Singh—horrid disgraced—with orders to hand over his command, etc., to Cathcart MacMonnie."

"Observe!" said Dick Four. "One colonel of the Political Department in charge of thirty Sikhs, on a hilltop. Observe, my children!"

"Naturally, Cathcart not being a fool, even if he *is* a Political, let Stalky do his shooting within fifteen miles of Fort Everett for the next six months, and I always understood they and Rutton Singh *and* the prisoner were as thick as two thieves. Then Stalky loafed back to his regiment, I believe. I've never seen him since."

"I have, though," said McTurk, swelling with pride.

We all turned as one man.

"It was at the beginning of this hot weather. I was in camp in the Jullunder doab and stumbled slap on Stalky in a Sikh village; sitting on the one chair of state, with half the population grovelin' before him, a dozen Sikh babies on his knees, an old harridan clappin' him on the shoulder, and a garland o' flowers round his neck. Told me he was recruitin'. We dined together that night, but he never said a word of the business at the Fort. Told me, though, that if I wanted any supplies I'd better say I was Koran Sahib's *bhai;* and I did, and the Sikhs wouldn't take my money."

"Ah! That must have been one of Rutton Singh's villages," said Dick Four; and we smoked for some time in silence.

"I say," said McTurk, casting back through the years. "Did Stalky ever tell you *how* Rabbits-Eggs came to rock King that night?"

"No," said Dick Four.

Then McTurk told.

"I see," said Dick Four, nodding. "Practically he duplicated that trick over again. There's nobody like Stalky."

"That's just where you make the mistake," I said. "India's full of Stalkies —Cheltenham and Haileybury and Marlborough chaps—that we don't know anything about, and the surprises will begin when there is really a big row on."

"Who will be surprised?" said Dick Four.

"The other side. The gentlemen who go to the front in first-class carriages. Just imagine Stalky let loose on the south side of Europe with a sufficiency of Sikhs and a reasonable prospect of loot. Consider it quietly."

"There's something in that, but you're too much of an optimist, Beetle," said the Infant.

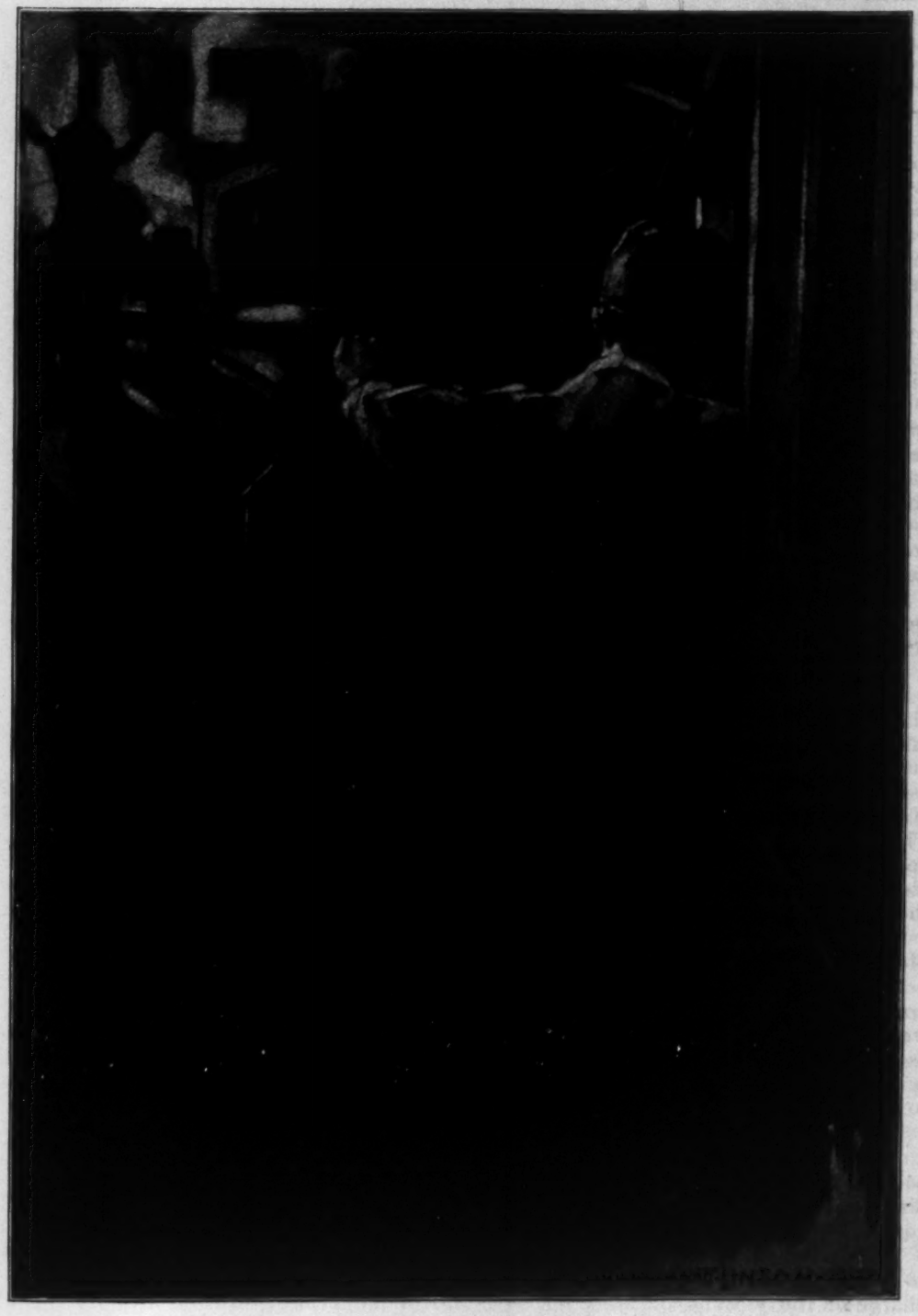
"Well, I've a right to be. Ain't I responsible for the whole thing? You needn't laugh. Who wrote 'Aladdin now has got his wife'—eh?"

"What's that got to do with it?" said Tertius.

"Everything," said I.

"Prove it," said the Infant.

And I have.



"I LOOK ALONG THE LINE TO SEE
THAT ALL THE LAMPS ARE WHITE."

WILL THE LIGHTS BE WHITE?

By Cy Warman,

Author of "Tales of an Engineer."

Oft when I feel my engine swerve,
As o'er strange rails we fare,
I strain my eyes around the curve
For what awaits us there.

When swift and free she carries me
Through yards unknown, at night,
I look along the line to see
That all the lamps are white.

A blue light! (rep track) crippled car;
The green light signals "slow,"
The red light is a danger light,
The white light "Let her go."

Again the open fields we roam,
And when the night is fair,
I gaze up in the starry dome,
And wonder what is there.

For who can speak for those who dwell
Behind the curving sky?
No man has ever lived to tell
Just what it means to die.

Swift towards life's terminal I trend,
The run seems short to-night.
God only knows what's at the end;
I hope the lamps are white.

THE VOYAGE OF COPLEY BANKS.

A TALE OF THE HIGH SEAS.

By A. Conan Doyle,

Author of "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," "Rodney Stone," etc.

THE buccaneers were something higher than a mere band of marauders. They were a floating republic with laws, usages, and discipline of their own. In their endless and remorseless quarrel with the Spaniards they had some semblance of right upon their side. Their bloody harryings of the cities of the Main were not more barbarous than the inroads of the Spaniards upon the Netherlands—or upon the Caribs in these same American lands.

The chief of the buccaneers, were he English or French, a Morgan or a Granmont, was still a responsible person, whose country might countenance him, or even praise him, so long as he refrained from any deed which might shock the leathery seventeenth-century conscience too outrageously. Some of them were touched with religion, and it is still remembered how Sawkins threw the dice overboard upon the Sabbath and Daniel pistoled a man before the altar for irreverence.

But there came a day when the fleets of the buccaneers no longer mustered at the Tortugas, and the solitary and outlawed pirate took their place. Yet even with him the tradition of restraint and of discipline still lingered, and among the early pirates, the Avorys, the Englands, and the Robertses, there remained some respect for human sentiment. They were more dangerous to the merchant than to the seaman.

But they in turn were replaced by more savage and desperate men, who frankly recognized that they would get no quarter in their war with the human race and who swore that they would give as little as they got. Of their histories we know little that is trustworthy. They wrote no memoirs, and left no trace, save an occasional blackened and bloodstained derelict adrift upon the face of the Atlantic. Their deeds could only be surmised from the long roll of ships that never made their port.

Searching the records of history, it is only here and there in an Old-World trial that the veil that shrouds them seems for an instant to be lifted and we catch a glimpse of some amazing and grotesque brutality behind. Such was the breed of Ned Low, of Gow the Scotchman, and of the infamous Sharkey, whose coal-black bark, the "Happy Delivery," was known from the Newfoundland banks to the mouths of the Orinoco as the dark forerunner of misery and of death.

There were many men, both among the islands and on the main, who had a blood feud with Sharkey, but not one who had suffered more bitterly than Copley Banks of Kingston. Banks had been one of the leading sugar merchants of the West Indies. He was a man of position, a member of the council, the husband of a Percival, and a cousin of the governor of Virginia. His two sons had been sent to London to be educated, and their mother had gone over to bring them back. On their return voyage the ship, the "Duchess of Cornwall," fell into the hands of Sharkey, and the whole family met with an infamous death.

Copley Banks said little when he heard the news, but he sank into a morose and enduring melancholy. He neglected his business, avoided his friends, and spent much of his time in the low taverns of the fishermen and seamen. There, amidst riot and deviltry, he sat silently puffing at his pipe, with a set face and a smoldering eye. It was generally supposed that his misfortunes had shaken his wits, and his old friends looked at him askance, for the company which he kept was enough to bar him from honest men.

From time to time there came rumors of Sharkey over the sea; and once there came a man who had been mate of a

"FOR HOURS THEY SAT TOGETHER OVER THE MAP, AND THE DUMB MAN POINTED HERE AND THERE."

Guineaman and who had escaped from the pirate's hands. He could not speak —for reasons which Sharkey could best supply—but he could write; and he did write, to the very great interest of Copley Banks. For hours they sat together over the map, and the dumb man pointed here and there to outlying reefs and tortuous inlets, while his companion sat smoking in silence, with his unvarying face and his fiery eyes.

One morning, some two years after his misfortune, Mr. Copley Banks strode into his own office with his old air of energy and alertness. The manager stared at him in surprise, for it was months since he had shown any interest in business.

"Good morning, Mr. Banks," said he.

"Good morning, Freeman. I see that the 'Ruffling Harry' is in the bay."

"Yes, sir; she clears for the Windward Islands on Wednesday."

"I have other plans for her, Freeman. I have determined upon a slaving venture to Whydah."

"But her cargo is ready, sir."

"Then it must come out again, Freeman. My mind is made up, and the 'Ruffling Harry' must go slaving to Whydah." All argument and persuasion were vain, so the manager had dolefully to clear the ship once more.

And then Copley Banks began to make preparations for his African voyage. It appeared that he relied upon force rather than barter for the filling of his hold, for he carried none of those showy trinkets which savages love; but the brig was fitted with eight nine-pounder guns and racks full of muskets and cutlasses. The after sailroom next the cabin was transformed into a powder magazine, and she carried as many round shot as a well-found privateer. Water and provisions were shipped for a long voyage.

But the preparation of his ship's com-

pany was most surprising. It made Freeman, the manager, realize that there was truth in the rumor that his master had taken leave of his senses. For, under one pretext or another, he began to dismiss the old and tried hands, who had served the firm for years, and in their place he embarked the scum of the port—men whose reputations were so vile that the lowest crimp would have been ashamed to furnish them.

There was Birthmark Sweetlocks, who was known to have been present at the killing of the logwood cutters, so that his hideous scarlet disfigurement was put down by the fanciful as being a red afterglow from that great crime. He was first mate, and under him was Israel Martin, a little sun-wilted fellow who had served with Howell Davies at the taking of Cape Coast castle.

The crew were chosen from amongst those whom Banks had met and known in their own infamous haunts, and his table-steward was a haggard-faced man who gobbled at you when he tried to talk. His beard had been shaved, and it was impossible to recognize him as the same man whom Sharkey had placed under the knife and who had escaped to tell his experiences to Copley Banks.

These doings were not unnoticed, nor yet uncommented upon, in the town of Kingston. The commandant of the troops—Major Harvey of the artillery—made serious representations to the governor.

"What do you suspect?" asked the governor, who was a slow-witted man, broken down with fevers and port wine.

"I suspect," said the soldier, "that it is Stede Bonnet over again."

Now Stede Bonnet was a planter of high reputation and religious character, who, from some sudden and overpowering freshet of wildness in his blood, had given up everything in order to start off pirating in the Caribbean Sea. The example was a recent one, and it had caused the utmost consternation in the islands. Governors had before now been accused of being in league with pirates and of receiving commissions upon their plunder, so that any want of vigilance was open to a sinister construction.

"Well, Major Harvey," said he, "I am vastly sorry to do anything which may offend my friend, Copley Banks, for many a time have my knees been under his mahogany; but, in face of what you say, there is no choice for me but to order you to board the vessel and to satisfy yourself as to her character and destination."

So at one in the morning Major Harvey, with a launchful of his soldiers, paid a surprise visit to the "Ruffling Harry," with the result that they picked up nothing more solid than a hempen cable floating at the moorings. It had been slipped by the brig, whose owner had scented danger.

When, upon the next morning, the brig had left Morant Point a mere haze upon the southern horizon, the men were called aft, and Copley Banks revealed his plans to them. He had chosen them, he said, as brisk boys and lads of spirit, who would rather run some risk upon the sea than starve for a living upon the shore. King's ships were few and weak, and they could master any trader who might come their way. Others had done well at the business, and with a handy, well-found vessel, there was no reason why they should not turn their tarry jackets into velvet coats. If they were prepared to sail under the black flag, he was ready to command them; but if any wished to withdraw, they might have the gig and row back to Jamaica.

Four men out of six and forty asked for their discharge, went over the ship's side into the boat, and rowed away amidst the jeers and howlings of the crew. The rest assembled aft, and drew up the articles of their association. A square of black tarpaulin had the white skull painted upon it, and was hoisted, amidst cheering, at the main.

Officers were elected, and limits of their authority fixed. Copley Banks was chosen captain; but as there are no mates on a pirate craft, Birthmark Sweetlocks became quartermaster and Israel Martin the boatswain. There was no difficulty in knowing what was the custom of the brotherhood, for half the men, at least, had served upon pirates before. Food should be the same for all, and no man should interfere with another man's drink. The captain should have a cabin, but all hands should be welcome to enter it when they chose.

All should share and share alike, save only the captain, quartermaster, boatswain, carpenter, and master gunner, who had from a quarter to a whole share extra. He who saw a prize first should have the best weapon taken out of her. He who boarded her first should have the richest suit of clothes aboard of her. Every man might treat his own prisoner, be it man or woman, after his own fashion. If a man flinched from his gun, the quartermaster should pistol him. These were some of the rules which the crew of the "Ruffling

Harry" subscribed to by putting forty-two crosses at the foot of the paper upon which they had been drawn.

So a new rover was afloat upon the seas, and her name before a year was over became as well known as that of "Happy Delivery." From the Bahamas to the Leewards, and from the Leewards to the Windwards, Copley Banks became the rival of Sharkey and the terror of traders. For a long time the bark and the brig never met, which was the more singular as the "Ruffling Harry" was forever looking in at Sharkey's resorts; but at last, one day when she was passing down the inlet of Coxon's Hole, at the east end of Cuba, with the intention of careening, there was the "Happy Delivery," with her blocks and tackle-falls already rigged for the same purpose.

Copley Banks fired a shotted salute and hoisted the green trumpeter ensign, as the custom was among the gentlemen of the sea. Then he dropped his boat and went aboard

Captain Sharkey was not a man of a genial mood, nor had he any kindly sympathy for those who were of the same trade as himself. Copley Banks found him seated astride one of the after guns, with his New England quartermaster, Ned Galloway, and a crowd of roaring ruffians standing about him. Yet none of them roared with quite such assurance when Sharkey's pale face and filmy blue eyes were turned upon him.

He was in his shirt-sleeves, with his cambric frills breaking through his open, red satin, long-flapped vest. The scorching sun seemed to have no power upon his fleshless frame, for he wore a low fur cap, as though it had been winter. A many-colored band of silk passed across his body and supported a short, murderous sword, while his broad, brass-buckled belt was stuffed with pistols.

"Sink you for a poacher!" he cried, as Copley Banks passed over the bulwarks. "I will drub you within an inch of your life, and that inch also! What mean you by fishing in my waters?"

Copley Banks looked at him, and his eyes were like a traveler's who sees his home at last.

"I am glad that we are of one mind," said he, "for I am myself of opinion that the seas are not large enough for the two of us. But if you will take your sword and pistols and come upon a sand bank with me, then the world will be rid of a villain whichever way it goes."

"Now, this is talking!" cried Sharkey, jumping off the gun and holding out his hand. "I have not met many who could look John Sharkey in the eyes and speak with a full breath. May the devil seize me if I do not choose you as a consort! But if you play me false, then I will come aboard of you and gut you upon your own poop."

"And I pledge you the same," said Copley Banks.

"BUT BEFORE HE CLOSED IT HE TOOK AN EXULTANT LOOK BACKWARDS."

That summer they went north as far as the Newfoundland banks, and harried the New York traders and the whale ships from New England. It was Copley Banks who captured the Liverpool ship, "House of Han-

over," but it was Sharkey who fastened her master to the windlass and pelted him to death with empty claret bottles.

Together they engaged the king's ship, "Royal Fortune," which had been sent in search of them, and beat her off after a night action of five hours, the drunken, raving crews fighting naked in the light

"THEY WAITED AND WAITED, WATCHING."

of the battle-lanterns, with a bucket of rum and a pannikin laid by the tackles of every gun. They ran to Topsail Inlet in North Carolina to refit, and then in the spring they were at the Grand Caicos, ready for a long cruise down the West Indies.

By this time Sharkey and Copley Banks had become very excellent friends, for Sharkey loved a whole-hearted villain and he loved a man of metal, and it seemed to him that the two met in the captain of the "Ruffling Harry." It was long before he gave his confidence to him, for cold suspicion lay deep in his character. Never once would he trust himself outside his own ship and away from his own men.

But Copley Banks came often on board the "Happy Delivery," and joined Sharkey in many of his morose debauches, so that at last his misgivings were set at rest. He knew nothing of the evil that he had done him, for of his many victims, how could he remember the woman and the two boys whom he had slain with such levity so long ago? When, therefore, he received a challenge to himself and to his quartermaster for a carouse upon the last evening of their stay at the Caicos bank, he saw no reason to refuse.

A well-found passenger ship had been rifled the week before, so their fare was of the best, and after supper five of them drank deeply together. There were the two captains, Birthmark Sweetlocks, Ned Galloway, and Israel Martin, the old buccaneersman. To wait upon them was the dumb steward, whose head Sharkey split with his glass because he had been too slow in the filling of it.

The quartermaster had slipped Sharkey's pistols away from him, for it was an old joke with him to fire them cross-handed under the table, and see who was the luckiest man. It was a pleasantry which had cost his boatswain his leg; so now when the table was cleared they would coax Sharkey's weapons away from him on the excuse of the heat, and lay them out of his reach.

The captain's cabin of the "Ruffling Harry" was in a deckhouse upon the poop, and a stern-chaser gun was mounted at the back of it. Round shot were racked round the wall, and three great hogsheads of powder made a stand for dishes and for bottles. In this grim room the five

pirates sang and roared and drank, while the silent steward still filled up their glasses and passed the box and the candle round for their tobacco-pipes. Hour after hour the talk became fouler, the voices hoarser, the curses and shoutings more incoherent, until three of the five had closed their bloodshot eyes and dropped their swimming heads upon the table.

Copley Banks and Sharkey were left face to face, the one because he had drunk the least, the other because no amount of liquor would ever shake his iron nerve or warm his sluggish blood. Behind him stood the watchful steward, forever filling up his waning glass. From without came the low lapping of the tide, and from over the water a sailor's chanty from the bark :

"A trader sailed from Stepney town,
Wake her up! Shake her up! Try her with the mainsail!
A trader sailed from Stepney town,
With a keg full of gold and a velvet gown.
Ho, the bully Rover Jack,
Waiting with his yard aback
Out upon the Lowland sea."

The two boon companions sat listening in silence. Then Copley Banks glanced at the steward, and the man took a coil of rope from the shot-rack behind him.

"Captain Sharkey," said Copley Banks, "do you remember the 'Duchess of Cornwall,' which you took and sank three years ago off the Statira shoal?"

"Curse me if I can bear their names in mind," said Sharkey. "We did as many as ten ships a week about that time."

"There were a mother and two sons among the passengers. May be that will bring it back to your mind."

Captain Sharkey leaned back in thought, with his huge thin beak of a nose jutting upward. Then he burst suddenly into a high treble, neighing laugh. He remembered it, he said, and he added details to prove it.

"But burn me if it had not slipped from my mind!" he cried. "How came you to think of it?"

"It was of interest to me," said Copley Banks, "for the woman was my wife and the lads were my only sons."

Sharkey stared across at his companion, and saw that the smoldering fire which lurked always in his eyes had burned up into a lurid flame. He read their menace, and he clapped his hands to his empty belt. Then he turned to seize a weapon, but the bight of rope was cast about him, and in an instant his arms were bound to his side. He fought like a wild-cat, and screamed for help.

"Ned!" he yelled. "Ned! Wake up! Here's villainy! Help, Ned, help!"

But the three men were far too deeply sunk in their swinish sleep for any voice to wake them. Round and round went the rope, until Sharkey was swathed like a mummy from ankle to neck. They propped him stiff and helpless against a powder-barrel, and they gagged him with a handkerchief, but his filmy, red-rimmed eyes still looked curses at them. The dumb man chattered in his exultation, and Sharkey winced for the first time when he saw the empty mouth before him. He understood that vengeance, slow and patient, had dogged him long and clutched him at last.

The two captors had their plans all arranged, and they were somewhat elaborate.

First of all they stove the heads of two of the great powder-barrels, and they heaped the contents out upon the table and floor. They piled it round and under the three drunken men, until each sprawled in a heap of it. Then they carried Sharkey to the gun, and they triced him sitting over the port-hole, with his face about a foot from the muzzle. Wriggle as he would he could not move an inch either to right or left, and the dumb man trussed him up with a sailor's cunning, so that there was no chance that he should work free.

"Now, you bloody devil," said Copley Banks, softly, "you must listen to what I have to say to you, for they are the last words that you will hear. You are my man now, and I have bought you at a price, for I have given all that a man can give here below, and I have given my soul as well.

"To reach you I have had to sink to your level. For two years I strove against it, hoping that some other way might come, but I learned that there was no other way. I've robbed and I have murdered—worse still, I have laughed and lived with you—and all for the one end. And now my time has come, and you will die as I would have you die, seeing the shadow creeping slowly upon you, and the devil waiting for you in the shadow."

Sharkey could hear the hoarse voices of his rovers singing their chanty over the water:

"Where is the trader of Stepney town?
Wake her up! Shake her up! Every stick a-bending!
Where is the trader of Stepney town?
His gold's on the capstan, his blood's on his gown,

All for bully Rover Jack,
Reaching on the weather tack
Right across the Lowland sea."

The words came clear to his ear, and just outside he could hear two men pacing backward and forward upon the deck. And yet he was helpless, staring down the mouth of the nine-pounder, unable to move an inch or to utter so much as a groan. Again there came the burst of voices from the deck of the bark:

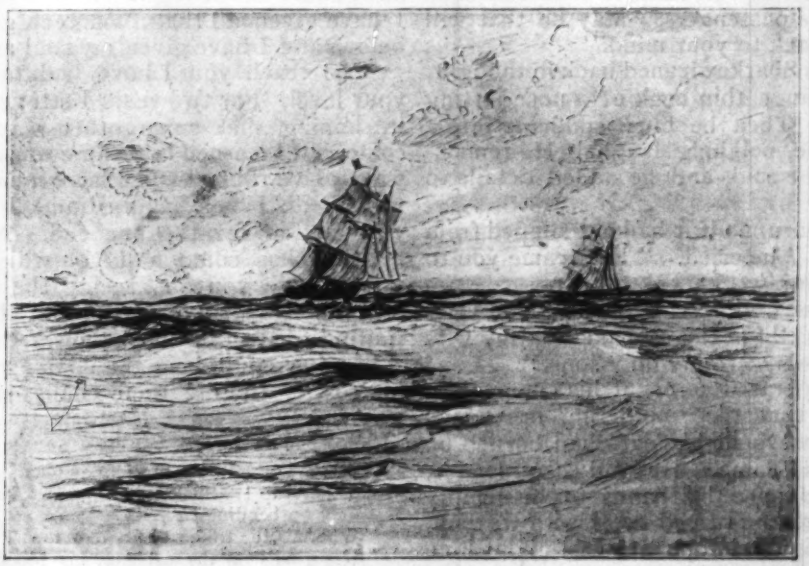
"So it's up and it's over to Stornoway Bay,
Pack it on! Crack it on! Try her with the stunsails!
It's off on a bowline to Stornoway Bay,
Where the liquor is good and the lasses are gay,
Waiting for their bully Jack,
Watching for him sailing back
Right across the Lowland sea."

To the dying pirate the jovial words and rollicking tune made his own fate seem the harsher, but there was no softening in his venomous blue eyes. Copley Banks had brushed away the priming of the gun, and had sprinkled fresh powder over the touch-hole. Then he had taken up the candle, and cut it to the length of about an inch. This he placed upon the loose powder at the breech of the gun. Then he scattered powder thickly over the floor beneath, so that when the candle fell at the recoil it must explode the huge pile in which the three drunkards were wallowing.

"You've made others look death in the face, Sharkey," said he. "Now it has come to be your own turn. You and these swine here shall go together." He lit the candle-end as he spoke, and blew out the other lights upon the table. Then he passed out with the dumb man, and locked the cabin door upon the outer side. But before he closed it, he took an exultant look backwards and received one last curse from those unconquerable eyes. In the single dim circle of light, that ivory-white face with the gleam of moisture upon the high bald forehead was the last that was ever seen of Sharkey.

There was a skiff alongside, and in it Copley Banks and the dumb steward made their way to the beach, and looked back upon the brig riding in the moonlight, just outside the shadow of the palm-trees. They waited and waited, watching that dim light which shone through the stern port. And then at last there came the dull thud of a gun, and an instant later the shattering crash of the explosion. The long, sleek, black bark, the sweep of white sand, and the fringe of nodding, feathery palm-trees sprang into dazzling light, and back into darkness again. Voices screamed and called upon the bay.

Then Copley Banks, his heart singing within him, touched his companion upon the shoulder, and they plunged together into the lonely and unexplored jungle of the Caicos. Two months later an outward-bound tobacco ship from Havana found two desolate outcasts upon Mosquito Point, and, touched by their tale of outrage and marooning, landed them safely in London, where all trace of them was forever lost.



Too Late.

MR. C. D. GIBSON ON LOVE AND LIFE.

A NOTE BY ANTHONY HOPE,

Author of "The Prisoner of Zenda," "Phroso," etc.

With reproductions of some of the more significant drawings by Mr. Gibson.

TO speak in adequate terms and with competent knowledge of the technical qualities which have won for Mr. Gibson's work its high and deserved fame would not be in my power, and I am not going to make any attempt at such a task. But lack of the qualifications of a critic of art does not interfere with the pleasure and interest with which one who is from time to time called upon to study somewhat similar aspects of life turns over a portfolio of the drawings in which this artist records his impressions of society and reflects the spirit with which he regards his material.

THE ARTIST'S PREFERENCE FOR THE ATTRACTIVE SIDES OF LIFE.

If you thus direct your mind rather to the thing expressed than to the excellence of the means at the artist's command for expressing it, your first thought, perhaps, will be that you are following one who is undoubtedly a bit of a satirist; his humor is bound to make him that; yet he is a cheerful satirist. Even when he is presenting scenes for which we can expect nothing but a frown from the moralist, he is seldom irredeemably grim; his indignation is liberally tempered with amusement, and is chastened by a recognition that ordinary folk may occupy some of their time in foolish and unbecoming ways and yet not be such very bad fellows after

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all. His pen is dipped in charity, and he prefers subjects where this pleasantest of the virtues need not despair of proper opportunity. There are Bohemians, ragamuffins, persons whose characters will not bear investigation; but he seldom shows you the most revolting vices, such as cruelty, mercilessness, or the hatred of good. And, thanks probably in part to his very remarkable power of depicting beautiful human beings (a gift, I venture to think, rather curiously rare), he turns by preference to the attractive sides of life and draws for much of his work on the normal, simple, healthy procession of our days from an eager youth, through a vigorous middle age, to a calm and honorable decline. But youth is his favorite; when its reality is gone he will still bring it back in visions. Look at these two pictures, "Previous Tenants" and "The Old Tune." These touch finely the note of gentle sadness with which man, resigned but never reconciled, accepts his decay and mortality; they breathe the sigh with which he remembers how the fruit of life tasted and that now he is too stiff and infirm to climb the trunk of the tree and bring down the prize. But there is no moroseness; the young girl stands by the old man, reminding us that youth is deathless, although the young are not.

HIS CUPID.

The same color of mood is very visible in Mr. Gibson's treatment of love, a subject which properly engages much of his attention. The little figure of Cupid which he is so fond of drawing seems to me very significant as well as very charming. No doubt the satirist peeps out here; the boy is not tragic (Mr. Gibson perhaps eschews as too easy that path to a reputation for profundity); he is hardly serious, though he is engaged on work that has serious results. He can, indeed, assume great emotions for his own purposes; he can sigh and look very despairing. But there is a want of sincerity about these assumptions; they are tricks played to persuade you to let him in. His native temper is an insinuating impishness, cloaked sometimes by a deceitful innocence and pathos, but breaking through at every minute. This may be studied in "The Last Guest." Here, again, the artist lightly touches the note of sorrow, of youth gone, of the inevitable contrast that years so cruelly perfect. But Cupid does not take the moment that way at all. He sits laughing and sipping champagne! He's not old. And he seems very much amused to find himself where he is; the place was very different when he came; he is chaffing his faithful hosts; he finds them, I fear, a little absurd. Look at him again in a most delightful drawing, "One More Victim," where he stands in his smith's apron and looks at the chains with which he has bound his prisoner; his face is alight with roguish triumph, and he hugs himself with fat little arms; he had those chains locked on her before she knew that he had so much as begun to forge them. There is another drawing, which I have not before me now, but remember very well. A pretty young widow, clad in mournful black, sits alone—as she thinks; the world is over for her, poor thing! Then her eyes fall suddenly on the small impudent form which has got into the house somehow and sits there deriding her; he exults all the more because he knows that the solemn will be much shocked by his arrival. In such a guise he is irresistible; you would fall in love, if only for the sake of sharing the fun.

HIS LOVERS.

It helps us to sympathize with Cupid's triumphs when we look at the girls over whom they are won. We perceive that there is something to conquer. For the girl whom the artist gives us is not a ready prey to sentiment and does not yield very easily. She is happy, healthy, and proud; there is a touch of austerity and a hint of haughtiness in her maidenly air; she does not languish, though no doubt she might sometimes flirt securely. Love must stalk his game; though confident of success in the end, he is strategic in his approaches; he seeks to surprise her, gets in when she isn't looking, and knows that he is most dangerous when he is least expected. So it should be; the artist's humorous presentment of the artifices of his Cupid's pursuit is a true testimony to the quarry's purity of heart and healthy soundness of nature; we believe that the hard-won victory will be complete, and do not refuse our consent when we are invited to trust to such a permanence of it as will resist the lapse of years and the decay of beauty. And Mr. Gibson is most commendably jealous for his pretty girls; he knows that they have much to give, and would not have them give it unworthily. He finds for them very handsome young men, fine fellows who worship them as they deserve, and he is roused to an unusual directness of indignation when they play false to themselves and go hunting after money, rank, and such-like snares. His pencil is never more relentless than in depicting the husband in such a match, with his lined,

THE OLD TUNE.

wrinkled, pimpled face, wicked as old Lord Methuselah's in Thackeray. Alas! I fear that in Mr. Gibson's mind this person is only too often a fellow-countryman of mine. But I will not charge him with national jealousy. I applaud and beg leave to share an indignation so well warranted and so true an evidence of reverence for that whose betrayal it rebukes; and to be more indignant in proportion as the lady is more beautiful, though, indeed, it may not be logic, is surely mere humanity. Why, but for these unworthy motives, one of ourselves might have been the man! Mr. Gibson is as convinced a prophet of love as any romancer of them all; neither wealth nor splendor nor even (as the tragic figure in his "Nothing but Fame" reminds us) glory can be allowed to fill its place. When Mr. Gibson deals with love, his pictures, closely as they reflect modern and every-day life, are in fact on the plane and in the temper of romance. We have the simple, joyous, intense love of well-conditioned and comely young people for one another, a love that is sound and abides; this he extracts from the complexities of society and exhibits with the simplicity of romance, almost with the single-heartedness of poetry. It is a very sunny corner of the world's landscape, and the sunshine gleams brightly in these sketches of it.

PICTURES OF ENGLISH LIFE.

But to stop here would be to do sore injustice to the range and versatility of Mr. Gibson's talent, and in an Englishman would betray a special ingratitude; for he has crossed the seas to tell us what we are like, and has carried out his task in many drawings of very remarkable acuteness. I have before me the drawing entitled "In a London Theatre." A man and his wife sit in the back row of the stalls; behind them is the crowded and ebullient front bench of the pit. Here we have an admirable variety of types; but to my mind the cream of the picture is the man and woman in the stalls. The man is of the professional classes, probably a lawyer; he is not handsome, but he's very clean; he has practical ability, but the play does not quite appeal to him; his solidity, just bordering on stolidity, makes him an admirable specimen of a large and very valuable class of his fellow-countrymen. Yet the woman is, as it seems to me, even a greater triumph. In her there is no touch at all of caricature; and I feel that I have known thousands of her. She is pleasing to look at, not pretty; capable in her way as her husband is in his, but very little more poetic than he; she holds strongly the received opinions of her sex, position, and time; she is very orderly; even dress is with her not an unscrupulous passion, but only a preoccupation necessarily and properly very engrossing. Really, I do not think that any other single figure could cover and sum up more that is characteristic of English life and society and of what is perhaps the prevailing temper of mind in England. Then look at the picture of the "Drawing-Room" ("Her First Glimpse of Royalty"). My duty has never called me to a Drawing-Room, and consequently I have not been; but obviously it must be just like that. I will not give any reasons for this opinion, but content myself with remarking how effectively the artist, again with nothing that can be called caricature, indeed with an obvious fidelity, yet brings out and exhibits the humor of the scene and extorts smiles from the loyalest lips. It is no flattery to say that Mr. Gibson's inspiration and skill enable him to interpret to us in England the society that we know, even as he reveals to us the society of his own land; he catches the spiritual essence of a Lord Chamberlain with no less certainty than that with which he sets before us the hard-bitten man of dollars whose pretty daughter is his only apology to a world out of which he has grown monstrously rich.

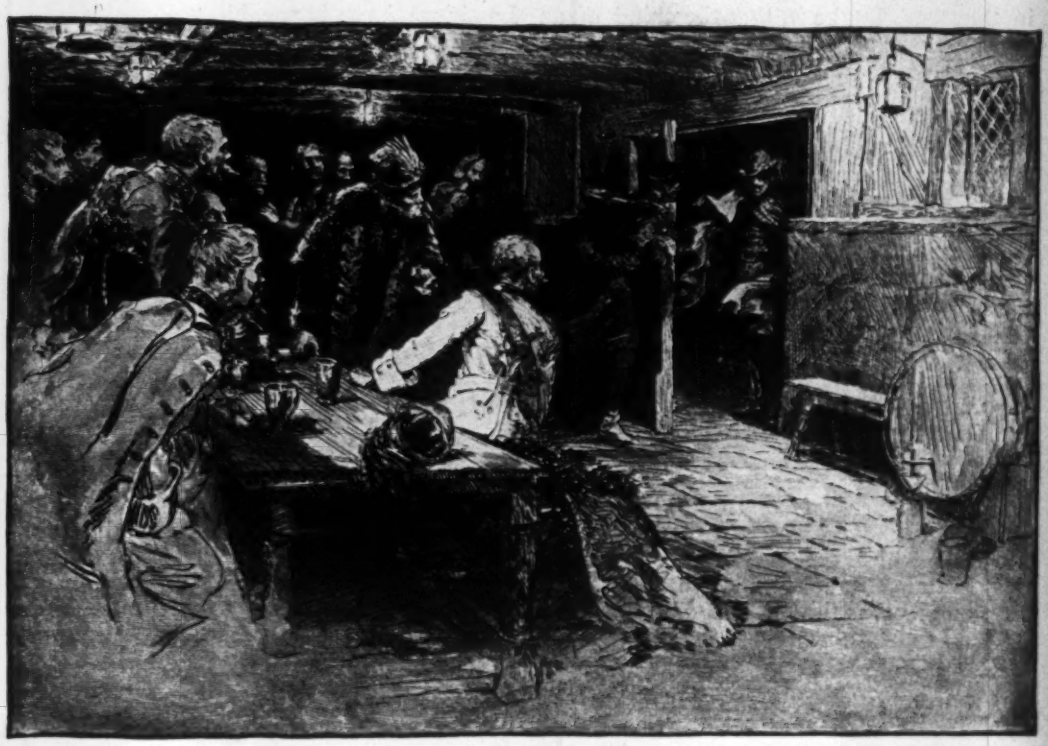
ANTHONY HOPE'S JUDGMENT OF MR. GIBSON'S WORK.

It is not for me to pass any judgment on Mr. Gibson; and even if it were, there is a danger (not always enough apprehended) in trying to "size up" men who are still in the early days of their career. Up to the present Mr. Gibson has devoted himself mainly to what are called the lighter sides of life; it is, perhaps, probable that the brightness and beauty to be found here will always prove the things most attractive to a man of his temperament. But a part of his merit lies in the fact that, while dealing mainly with the apparently superficial, he has contrived to get into his work and to convey to the minds of those who study it so much of what is really true and fundamental in human life and character, and to develop, in a series of sketches often fanciful in design and by no means ethical or didactic in intention, a view of the world so broad and so consistent. I do not accuse him of the solemn deliberateness which these words may seem to imply; it is not

THE LAST GUEST.

PREVIOUS TENANTS. (SOME MIDNIGHT VISITORS IN AN OLD HOUSE IN WASHINGTON SQUARE.)

in that way, I take it, that the mind of an artist most commonly works. It chooses what it likes and needs by impulse and instinct, rather than on any calculation; the revelation of the point of view is gradual to the worker no less than to the onlooker. At any rate, it is safe to say that Mr. Gibson has the true gift of the comedian; he sees the humor of situations and the variety of types, and is skilled in eliciting just the touch of sympathy which makes us feel at one with the scenes which we are regarding. As an example of what I now say, I will end by pointing to the drawing called "An Argument with the Leading Lady." Here we understand so well the position: how the four men, all men of the theater, find the poor lady so utterly and hopelessly unreasonable; yet each is very differently affected by her refusal to be reasonable. But we can sympathize with the woman also; we know that to her the men seem very brutal, and the trouble, whatever it may happen to be, real, immense, and poignant; probably she thinks that she would never respect herself again if she yielded her point. Lastly we have her maid, staid, prim, motionless behind her mistress, taking no part, no view, no side in a controversy that is no concern of hers, just waiting till her share of the world's work begins again, till there is hair to do, or something to put on or take off. We are less excited than the men; we are less impassive than the maid; we smile, as the comedian would have us smile, in recognition of truth, in a little amusement that this should be truth, with just a little prick of regret that truth should so often show things in a very uncomfortable condition. But such a drawing proves for the artist beyond doubt the possession of that humor and that sympathy which are so closely allied to one another and between them give the power of reading the feelings and minds of men. Such a power, working through a technical skill so great as Mr. Gibson's, leaves no question as to his position and his fame; and, moreover, since it is a quality of literature no less than of art, may perhaps be allowed to excuse these few words from a sadly uninstructed but very cordial admirer.



"GENTLEMEN, THE KING!"

By Robert Barr,

Author of "In the Midst of Alarms," "The Mutable Many," etc.

THE room was large, but with a low ceiling, and at one end of the lengthy, broad apartment stood a gigantic fireplace, in which was heaped a pile of blazing logs, whose light, rather than that of several lanterns hanging from nails along the timbered walls, illuminated the faces of the twenty men who sat within. Heavy timbers, blackened with age and smoke, formed the ceiling. The long, low, diamond-paned window in the middle of the wall opposite the door had been shuttered as completely as possible, but less care than usual had been taken to prevent the light from penetrating into the darkness beyond, for the night was a stormy and tempestuous one, the rain lashing wildly against the hunting-chalet, which in its time had seen many a merry hunting-party gathered under its ample roof. Every now and then a blast of wind shook the wooden edifice from garret to foundation, and caused a puff of smoke to come down the chimney and the white ashes to scatter in little whirlwinds over the hearth. On the opposite side from the shuttered window was the door, heavily barred. A long oaken table occupied the center of the room, and round this, in groups, seated and standing, were a score of men, all with swords at their sides; bearing, many of them, that air of careless hauteur which is supposed to be a characteristic of noble birth.

Flagons were scattered upon the table, and a barrel of wine stood in a corner of the room farthest from the fireplace. But it was evident that this was no ordinary drinking-party and that the assemblage was brought about by some high purport, of a nature so serious that it stamped anxiety on every brow. No servants were present, and every man who wished a fresh flagon of wine had to take his measure to the barrel in the corner and fill for himself.

The hunting-chalet stood in a wilderness, near the confines of the kingdom of Alluria, twelve leagues from the capital, and was the property of Count Staumn, whose tall, gaunt form stood erect at the head of the table as he silently listened to the discussion which every moment was becoming more and more heated, the principal speaking parts being taken by the obstinate, rough-spoken Baron Brunfels on the one hand, and the crafty, fox-like ex-Chancellor Steinmetz on the other.

"I tell you," thundered Baron Brunfels, bringing his huge fist down on the table, "I will not have the king killed. Such a proposal goes beyond what was intended when we banded ourselves together. The king is a fool, so let him escape like a fool. I am a conspirator, but not an assassin."

"It is not assassination, but justice," said the ex-chancellor, suavely, as if his tones were oil and the baron's boisterous talk were troubled waters.

"Justice!" cried the baron, with great contempt. "You have learned that cant word in the cabinet of the king himself, before he thrust you out. He eternally prates of justice; yet, much as I loathe him, I have no wish to compass his death, either directly or through gabbling of justice."

"Will you permit me to point out the reason that induced me to believe his continued exemption and state policy will not run together?" replied the advocate of the king's death. "If the king escapes he will take up his abode in a neighboring territory, and there will inevitably follow plots and counter-plots for his restoration; thus Alluria will be kept in a constant state of turmoil. There will doubtless grow up within the kingdom itself a party sworn to his restoration. We shall thus be involved in difficulties at home and abroad, and all for what? Merely to save the life of a man who is an enemy to each of us. We place thousands of lives in jeopardy; render our own positions insecure; bring continual disquiet upon the state; when all might be avoided by the slitting of one throat, even though that throat belong to the king."

It was evident that the lawyer's argumentative tone brought many to his side, and the conspirators seemed about evenly divided upon the question of life or death to the king. The baron was about to break out again with some strenuousness in favor of his own view of the matter when Count Staumn made a proposition that was eagerly accepted by all save Brunfels himself.

"Argument," said Count Staumn, "is ever the enemy of good comradeship. Let us settle the point at once, and finally, with the dice-box. Baron Brunfels, you are too seasoned a gambler to object to such a mode of terminating a discussion. Steinmetz, the law, of which you are so distinguished a representative, is often compared to a lottery; so you cannot look with disfavor upon a method that is as conclusive and as reasonably fair as the average decision of a judge. Let us throw, therefore, for the life of the king. I, as chairman of this meeting, will be umpire. Single throws, and the highest number wins. Baron Brunfels, you will act for the king, and if you win may bestow upon the monarch his life. Chancellor Steinmetz stands for the state. If he wins, then is the king's life forfeit. Gentlemen, are you agreed?"

"Agreed, agreed," cried the conspirators, with practically unanimous voice.

Baron Brunfels grumbled somewhat, but when the dice-horn was brought, and he heard the rattle of the bones within the leathern cylinder, the light of a gambler's love shone in his eyes and he made no further protest.

The ex-chancellor took the dice-box in his hand, and was about to shake, when there suddenly came upon them three stout raps against the door, given apparently with the hilt of a sword. Many not already standing started to their feet, and nearly all looked one upon another with deep dismay in their glances. The full company of conspirators were present; exactly a score of men knew of the rendezvous, and now the twenty-first man outside was beating the oaken panels. The knocking was repeated, but now accompanied by the words:

"Open, I beg of you."

Count Staumn left the table, and stealthily as a cat approached the door.

"Who is there?" he asked.

"A wayfarer, weary and wet, who seeks shelter from the storm."

"My house is already filled," spoke up the count. "I have no room for another."

"Open the door peacefully," cried the outlander, "and do not put me to the necessity of forcing it."

There was a ring of decision in the voice which sent quick pallor to more than one cheek. Ex-Chancellor Steinmetz rose to his feet with terror in his

eyes and chattering teeth; he seemed to recognize the invisible speaker. Count Staumn looked over his shoulder at the assemblage with an expression that plainly said, "What am I to do?"

"In the fiend's name," hissed Baron Brunfels, taking the precaution, however, to speak scarce above his breath, "if you are so frightened when it comes to a knock at the door, what will it be when the real knocks are upon you? Open, Count, and let the insistent stranger in. Whether he leave the place alive or no, there are twenty men here to answer."

The count undid the fastenings and threw open the door. There entered a tall man, completely enveloped in a dark cloak that was dripping wet. Drawn over his eyes was a hunter's hat of felt, with a drooping, bedraggled feather on it. The door was immediately closed and barred behind him, and the stranger, pausing a moment when confronted by so many inquiring eyes, flung off his cloak, throwing it over the back of a chair; then he removed his hat with a sweep, sending the raindrops flying. The intrigants gazed at him speechless, with varying emotions. They saw before them his Majesty, Rudolph, King of Alluria.

If the king had any suspicion of his danger, he gave no token of it. On his smooth, lofty forehead there was no trace of frown and no sign of fear. His was a manly figure, rather over than under six feet in height; not slim and gaunt like Count Staumn's, nor yet stout to excess like that of Baron Brunfels. The finger of time had touched with frost the hair at his temples, and there were threads of white in his pointed beard, but his sweeping mustache was still as black as the night from which he came. His frank, clear, honest eyes swept the company, resting momentarily on each; then he said in a firm voice, without the suspicion of a tremor in it:

"Gentlemen, I give you good evening; and although the hospitality of Count Staumn has needed spurring, I lay that not up against him, because I am well aware his apparent reluctance arose through the unexpectedness of my visit; and if the count will act as cup-bearer, we will drown all remembrance of a barred door in a flagon of wine, for, to tell the truth, gentlemen, I have ridden hard in order to have the pleasure of drinking with you."

As the king spoke these ominous words, he cast a glance of piercing intensity upon the company, and more than one quailed under it. He strode to the fireplace, spurs jingling as he went, and stood with his back to the fire, spreading out his hands to the blaze. Count Staumn left the bolted door, took an empty flagon from the shelf, filled it at the barrel in the corner, and, with a low bow, presented the brimming measure to the king.

Rudolph held aloft his beaker of Burgundy, and as he did so spoke in a loud voice that rang to the beams of the ceiling:

"Gentlemen, I give you a suitable toast. May none here gathered encounter a more pitiless storm than that which is raging without."

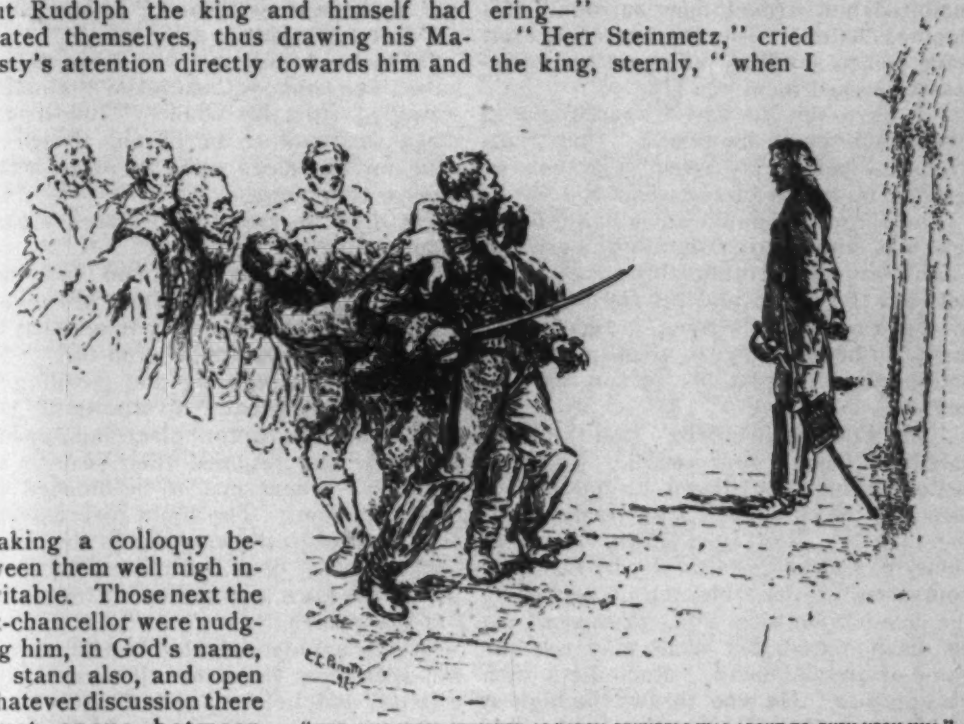
With this he drank off the wine, and, inclining his head slightly to the count, returned the flagon. No one, save the king, had spoken since he entered. Every word he had uttered seemed charged with double meaning, and brought to the suspicious minds of his hearers visions of a trysting-place surrounded by troops and the king standing there playing with them as a tiger plays with its victims. His easy confidence appalled them. When first he came in, several who were seated remained so, but one by one they rose to their feet, with the exception of Baron Brunfels, although he, when the king gave the toast, also stood. It was clear enough their glances of fear were not directed towards the king, but towards Baron Brunfels. Several pairs of eyes beseeched him in silent supplication, but the baron met none of these glances, for his gaze was fixed upon the king.

Every man present knew the baron to be reckless of consequences, frankly outspoken, thoroughly a man of the sword, and a despiser of diplomacy. They feared that at any moment he might blurt out the purport of the meeting, and more than one was thankful for the crafty ex-chancellor's planning, who, throughout, had insisted there should be no documentary evidence of their designs, either in their houses or on their persons. Some startling rumor must have reached the king's ear to bring him thus unexpectedly upon them. The anxiety of all was that some one should persuade the king that they were merely a storm-besieged hunting-party. They trembled in anticipation of Baron Brunfels's open candor, and dreaded the revealing of the real cause of their conference. There was now no chance to warn him: a man who spoke his mind, who never looked an inch beyond his nose,

even though his head should roll off in consequence; and if a man does not value his own head, how can he be expected to care for the heads of his neighbors?

"I ask you to be seated," said the king, with a wave of his hand.

Now, what should that stubborn fool of a baron do but remain standing when all but Rudolph the king and himself had seated themselves, thus drawing his Majesty's attention directly towards him and making a colloquy between them well nigh inevitable. Those next the ex-chancellor were nudging him, in God's name, to stand also, and open whatever discussion there must ensue between themselves and his Majesty, so that it might be smoothly carried on. But the ex-chancellor was ashen gray with fear, and his hand trembled on the table.



"THE KING STOOD UNMOVED AS BARON BRUNFELS WAS ABOUT TO RUSH UPON HIM."

"My Lord of Brunfels," said the king, a smile hovering about his lips, "I see that I have interrupted you at your old pleasure of dicing. While requesting you to continue your game as though I had not joined you, may I venture to hope the stakes you play for are not high?"

Every one held his breath, awaiting with deepest concern the reply of the frowning baron; and, when it came growling forth, there was little in it to ease their disquiet.

"Your Majesty," said Baron Brunfels, "the stakes are the highest that a gambler may play for."

"You tempt me, Baron, to guess that the hazard is a man's soul; but I see that your adversary is my worthy ex-chancellor, and as I should hesitate to impute to him the character of the devil, I am led, therefore, to the conclusion that you play for a human life. Whose life is in the cast, my Lord of Brunfels?"

Before the baron could reply, ex-Chancellor Steinmetz rose with some indecision to his feet. He began, in trembling voice:

"I beg your gracious permission to explain the reason of our gathering—"

"Herr Steinmetz," cried the king, sternly, "when I desire your interference I shall call for it; and remember this, Herr Steinmetz, the man who begins a game must play it to the end, even though he finds luck running against him."

The ex-chancellor sat down again, and drew his hand across his damp forehead.

"Your Majesty," spoke up the baron, a ring of defiance in his voice, "I speak not for my comrades, but for myself. I begin no game I am afraid to finish. We were about to dice in order to discover whether your Majesty should live or die."

A simultaneous moan seemed to rise from the assembled traitors. The smile returned to the king's lips.

"Baron," he said, "I have ever chided myself for loving you, for you were always a bad example to weak and impressionable natures. Even when your overbearing, obstinate intolerance compelled me to dismiss you from the command of my army, I could not but admire your sturdy honesty. Had I been able to graft your

love of truth upon some of my councillors, what a valuable group of advisers might I have gathered round me. But we have had enough of comedy, and now tragedy sets in. Those who are traitors to their ruler must not be surprised if a double traitor is one of their number. Why am I here? Why do two hundred mounted and armed men surround this doomed chalet? Miserable wretches, what have you to say that judgment be not instantly passed upon you?"

"I have this to say," roared Baron Brunfels, drawing his sword, "that whatever may befall this assemblage, you, at least, shall not live to boast of it."

The king stood unmoved as Baron Brunfels was about to rush upon him; but Count Staumn and others threw themselves between the baron and his victim, seeing in the king's words some intimation of mercy to be held out to them could but actual assault upon his person be prevented.

"My Lord of Brunfels," said the king, calmly, "sheath your sword. Your ancestors have often drawn it, but always for, and never against, the occupant of the throne. Now, gentlemen, hear my decision, and abide faithfully by it. Seat yourselves at the table, ten on each side, the dice-box between you. You shall not be disappointed, but shall play out the game of life and death. Each dices with his opposite. He who throws the highest number escapes. He who throws the lowest, places his weapons on the empty chair, and stands against yonder wall to be executed for the traitor that he is. Thus half of your company shall live, and the other half shall seek death with such courage as may be granted them. Do you agree, or shall I give the signal?"

With unanimous voice they agreed, all excepting Baron Brunfels, who spoke not.

"Come, Baron, you and my devoted ex-chancellor were about to play when I came in. Begin the game."

"Very well," replied the baron, nonchalantly. "Steinmetz, the dice-box is near your hand; throw."

Some one placed the cubes in the leathern cup and handed it to the ex-chancellor, whose shivering fingers relieved him of the necessity of shaking the box. The dice rolled out on the table—a three, a four, and a one. Those nearest reported the total.

"Eight!" cried the king. "Now, Baron."

Baron Brunfels carelessly threw the dice into their receptacle, and a moment after the spotted bones clattered on the table.

"Three sixes!" cried the baron. "If I only had such luck when I played for money!"

The ex-chancellor's eyes were starting from his head, wild with fear.

"We have three throws," he screamed.

"Not so," said the king.

"I swear I understood that we were to have three chances," shrieked Steinmetz, springing from his chair. "But it is all illegal, and not to be borne. I will not have my life diced away to please either king or commons."

He drew his sword, and placed himself in an attitude of defense.

"Seize him; disarm him, and bind him," commanded the king. "There are enough gentlemen in this company to see that the rules of the game are adhered to."

Steinmetz, struggling and pleading for mercy, was speedily overpowered and bound; then his captors placed him against the wall, and resumed their seats at the table. The next man to be doomed was Count Staumn. The count rose from his chair, bowed to the king and to the assembled company, drew forth his sword, broke it over his knee, and walked to the wall of the condemned.

The remainder of the fearful contest was carried on in silence, but with great celerity, and before a quarter of an hour was past, ten men had their backs to the wall, while the remaining ten were seated at the table, some on one side, and some on the other.

The men ranged against the wall were downcast, for however bravely a soldier may meet death in a hostile encounter, it is a different matter to face it bound and helpless at the hands of the executioner.

A shade of sadness seemed to overspread the countenance of the king, who still occupied the position he had taken at the first, with his back towards the fire.

Baron Brunfels shifted uneasily in his seat, and glanced now and then with compassion at his sentenced comrades. He was first to break the silence.

"Your Majesty," he said, "I am always loath to see a coward die. The whimperings of your former chancellor annoy me; therefore will I gladly take his place, and give to him the life and liberty you perhaps design for me, if, in exchange, I have the privilege of speaking my mind regarding you and your precious kingship."

"Unbind the valiant Steinmetz," said

the king. "Speak your mind freely, Baron Brunfels."

The baron rose, drew his sword from the scabbard, and placed it on the table.

"Your Majesty, backed by brute force," he began, "has condemned to death ten of your subjects. You have branded us as traitors, and such we are, and so find no fault with your sentence, merely recognizing that you represent, for the time being, the upper hand. You have reminded me that my ancestors fought for yours and they never turned their swords against their sovereign. Why, then, have our swords been pointed toward your breast? Because, King Rudolph, you are yourself a traitor. You belong to the ruling class, and have turned your back upon your order. You, a king, have made yourself a brother to the demagogue on the street corner, yearning for the cheap applause of the serf. You have shorn nobility of its privileges, and for what?"

"BARON BRUNFELS CRIED ALOUD: 'GENTLEMEN, THE KING!'"

"And for what?" echoed the king, with rising voice. "For this: that the plowman on the plain may reap what he has sown; that the shepherd on the hillside may enjoy the increase which comes to his flock; that taxation may be light; that my nobles should deal honestly with the people and not use their position for thievery and depredation; that those whom the state honors by appointing to positions of trust shall content themselves with the recompense lawfully given and refrain from peculation; that peace and security shall rest on the land; and that bloodthirsty swashbucklers shall not go up and down, inciting the people to carnage and rapine under the name of patriotism; that the kingdom of Alluria may live in amity with its neighbors, attending to its own affairs and meddling not with the concerns of others. This is the task I set myself when I came to the throne. What fault have you to find with the program, my Lord Baron?"

"The simple fault that it is the program of a fool," replied the baron, calmly. "In following it you have gained the resentment of your nobles and have not even received the thanks of those pitiable hinds, the plowmen in the valley, or the shepherds on the hills. You have impoverished us so that the clowns may have a few more coins with which to muddle in drink their already stupid brains. You are hated in cot and castle alike. You would not stand in your place for a moment, were not an army behind you. Being a fool, you think the common people like honesty, whereas they only curse

that they have not a share in the thieving."

"The people," said the king, soberly, "have been misled. Their ear has been abused by calumny and falsehood. Had it been possible for me personally to explain to them the good that must ultimately accrue to the land where honesty rules, I am confident I would have had their united and undivided support, even though my nobles deserted me."

"Not so, your Majesty; they would listen to you and cheer you, but when the next orator came among them, promising to divide the moon and give a share to each, they would gather round his banner and hoot you from the kingdom. What care they for rectitude of government? They see no farther than the shining florin that glitters on their palm. When your nobles were rich, they came to their castles among the people and scattered their gold with a lavish hand. Little recked the peasant how it was got, so long as he shared it. 'There,' they said, 'the coin comes to us that we have not worked for.' But now, with castles deserted and retainers dismissed, the people have to sweat to wring from traders the reluctant silver, and they cry, 'Thus it was not in times of old, and this king is the cause of it;' and so they spit upon your name, and shrug their shoulders when your honesty is mentioned. And now, Rudolph of Alluria, I have done, and I go the more jauntily to my death that I have had fair speech with you before the end."

The king, whose gaze had been fixed upon the floor before him, drew a deep sigh, and when he looked up at them, his eyes were veiled with moisture.

"I thought," he said slowly, "until to-night, that I had possessed some qualities, at least, of a ruler of men. I came here alone among you, and although there are brave men in this company, yet I had the ordering of events as I chose to order them, notwithstanding that odds stood a score to one against me. I still venture to think that whatever failures have attended my eight years' rule in Alluria arose from faults of my own, and not through imperfections in the plan or want of appreciation in the people. I have now to inform you that if it is disastrous for a king to act without the coöperation of his nobles, it is equally disastrous for them to plot against their leader. I beg to acquaint you with the fact that the insurrection so carefully prepared has broken prematurely out. My capital is in possession of the factions, who are industriously cutting each other's throats to settle which one of two smooth-tongued rascals shall be their president. While you were dicing to settle the fate of an already deposed king, and I was sentencing you to a mythical death, we were all alike being involved in common ruin. I have seen to-night more property in flames than all my savings during the last eight years would pay for. I have no horsemen at my back, and have stumbled here blindly, a much bedraggled fugitive, having lost my way in every sense of the phrase. And so I beg of the hospitality of Count Staumn another flagon of wine, and either a place of shelter for my patient horse, who has been left too long in the storm without, or else direction towards the frontier, whereupon my horse and I will set out to find it."

"Not towards the frontier!" cried Baron Brunfels, grasping again his sword and holding it aloft, "But towards the capital! We will surround you, and hew for you a way through that fickle mob back to the throne of your ancestors."

Each man sprang to his weapon, and brandished it above his head, while a ringing cheer echoed to the timbered ceiling.

"The king! The king!" they cried.

Rudolph smiled, and shook his head.

"Not so," he said. "I leave a thankless throne with a joy I find it impossible to express. As I sat on horseback, half way up the hill above the burning city, and heard the clash of arms, I was filled with amazement to think that men would actually fight for the position of ruler of the people. Whether the insurrection has brought freedom to themselves or not, the future will alone tell; but it has, at least, brought freedom to me. I now belong to myself. No man can question either my motives or my acts. Gentlemen, drink with me to the new president of Alluria, whoever he may be."

But the king drank alone, none other raising flagon to lip.

Then Baron Brunfels cried aloud:

"*Gentlemen, the king!*"

And never in the history of Alluria was a toast so heartily honored.

OUR QUEER OLD WORLD.

By James Whitcomb Riley,

Author of "The Old Swimmin'-Hole," "Poems Here at Home," etc.

Fer them 'at's here in airliest infant stages,
It's a hard world:
Fer them 'at gits the knocks o' boyhood's ages,
It's a mean world:
Fer them 'at nothin's good enough they're gittin,
It's a bad world:
Fer them 'at learns at last what's right and fittin',
It's a good world.

—The Hired Man.

I.

It's a purty hard world you find, my child—
It's a purty hard world you find!
You fight, little rascal! and kick and squall,
And snort out medicine, spoon and all!
When you're here longer you'll change your mind
And simmer down sort o' half-rickonciled.
But *now*—Jee!
My!—mun-nee!
It's a purty hard world, my child!

II.

It's a purty mean world you're in, my lad—
It's a purty mean world you're in!
We know, of course, in your schoolboy-days
It's a world o' too many troublesome ways
O' tryin' things over and startin' agin—
Yit *your* chance beats what your *parents* had
But *now*—O!
Fire-and-tow!
It's a purty mean world, my lad!

III.

It's a purty bad world you've struck, young chap—
It's a purty bad world you've struck!
But study the cards 'at you hold, you know,
And your hopes 'll sprout and your mustache grow,
And your store-clothes likely 'll change your luck
And you'll rake a rich heiress right into your lap!
But *now*—Poke,
Pool—and smoke—,
It's a purty bad world, young chap!

IV.

It's a purty good world this is, old man—
It's a purty good world this is!
Fer all its follies and shows and lies—
It's rainy weather, and cheeks likewise,
And age, hard-hearin', and rheumatiz.
But *we're* not a-faultin' the Lord's own plan:
All thing's jest
At their best!
It's a purty good world, old man!

W. V.—HER VIOLETS.

By William Canton,

Author of "W. V.—Her Book," "The Invisible Playmate," etc.

"SHALL we go into the Forest and get some violets?" W. V. asks gleefully, as she muffles herself in what she calls her bearskin. "And can't we take the Man with us, father?"

It is a clear forenoon in mid January; crisp with frost, but bright, and there is not a ripple in the sweet air. On the morning side of things the sun has blackened roofs and footpaths and hedges, but the rest of the world looks delightfully hoar and winterly.

Now when trunks and branches are clotted white to windward, the Forest, as every one knows, is quite an exceptional place for violets. Of course, you go far and far away—through the glades and dingles of the oak-men, and past the Webs of the Iron Spider, and beyond the Water of Heart's-ease, till you are on the verge of the Blue Distances. There all the roads come to an end, and that is the real beginning of the ancient wilderness of wood, which, W. V. tells me, covered nearly the whole of England in the days before the "old Romans" came. From what she has read in history, it appears that in the rocky regions of the wold there are still plenty of bears and fierce wolves and wild stags; and that the beavers still build weirs and log-houses across the streams. Well, when you have gone far enough, you will see a fire blazing in the snow on the high rocky part of the Forest, and around it twelve strange men sitting on huge boulders, telling stories of old times.

"And if January would let April change places with him," W. V. explains, "you would see *jumbos* of violets just leaping up through the snow in a minute. And I think he would, if we said we wanted them for the Man."

You see, the Man, who has been only three months with us and has had very little to say to any one since he came, is still almost a stranger, and W. V. treats him accordingly with much deference and consideration. The bleak foggy weather had set in when he arrived, and it has grown sharper and more trying ever since; and as he came direct from a climate of perpetual sunshine and everlasting blossom, there is always danger of his catching cold. He keeps a good deal to his own room, never goes abroad when the wind is in the east or north, and has not yet set foot in the Forest. This January day, however, is so bright and safe that we think we may lure him away; and in all the divine region of fresh air, what place is sunnier and more sheltered than the Forest? And then there is the hint of violets!

So off to the woods we go, and with us the Man, warm and snug, and companionable enough in his peculiar silent way.

It is pleasant to notice the first catkins, and to get to white sunlit spots where the snow shows that no one has preceded us. And what a delightful surprise it is to catch sight of the footprints of the wild creatures along the edge of the paths and among the bushes!

"Are the oak-men really asleep, father?" asks W. V. "Nobody else is."

We stop to examine the trail where Bunny has scuttled past. And here some small creature, a field-mouse perhaps, has waded through the fluffy drift. And do look at the bird-tracks at the foot of the big oaks!

"Oh, father, these go right inside that little hole under the root; is the bird there?"

And others go right round the trunk as though there had been a search for some small crevice of shelter.

As we wander along I think of all the change which has taken place since last I recorded our birthday rambles in the Forest. It is only a year ago, and yet how amazingly W. V. has grown in a twelvemonth! Even to her the Forest is no longer quite the same vague enchanted region it used to be. Strange people have started up out of history and invaded its green solitude; on the outskirts "ancient Britons," tattooed with blue woad, have made clearings and sown corn, and "old Romans" have run a long straight

"street" through one portion of it. There still lingers in her heart a coy belief in little green-clad oak-men, and flower-elves, and subtle sylvan creatures of fancy; indeed, it was only the other day that she asked me, "How *does* the sun keep up in the sky? Is it hanging on a fairy tree?" but I notice a growing impatience at "sham stories," and a preference for what has really happened,—"something about the Romans, or the Danes or Saxons, or Jesus." When I begin some wonderful saga, she looks up alertly, "True?"—then settles down to her enjoyment.

The shadowy figures of our old England perplex as much as they delight her imagination. I believe she cherishes a wild hope of finding some day the tiled floor of a Roman villa in a corner of her garden, "like the one in the Cotswolds, you know, father; Miss Jessie saw it." I find a note of the following conversation, just after the last hug had been given and the gas was being turned down to a peep:

W. V. The Ancient Britons are all dead, are they not?

MOTHER. Oh yes, of course; long ago.

W. V. Then they can't come and attack us now, can they?

MOTHER. No! No one wants to attack us. Besides, we are Britons ourselves, you know.

W. V. [*after a pause*]. I suppose we are the Ancient Britons' little babies. How funny!

And so to sleep, with, it may be, lively dreams springing out of that fearsome legend which Miss Jessie inscribes (in letters of fire) on the blackboard as a writing exercise: "England was once the home of the Britons. They were wild and savage."

In spite of her devotion to history and her love of truth, I fear W. V. cannot be counted on for accuracy. What am I to say when, in a rattle-pate mood, she tells me that not only Julius Cæsar but Oliver Cromwell was lost on board the "White Ship,"—like needles in a haystack? Her perception of the lapse of time and the remoteness of events is altogether untrustworthy. Last August we went across the Heath to visit the tumulus of Boadicea. As we passed the Ponds the sparkling of the water in the sun lit up her fancy,—"Wasn't it like fairies dancing?" After a little silence she was anxious to know whether there was a wreath on Boadicea's grave. Oh no. "Not any leaves either?" No, all the people who knew her had died long ago. There used to be two pine-trees, but they were dead too,—only two broken trunks left, which she could see yonder against the sky. A pause, and then, "We might have taken some flowers." Poor queen of old days, hear this, and smile and take solace! "If she hadn't poisoned herself, would she be alive now?" (Did she poison herself? How one forgets!) Alas, no! she, too, would have been dead long ago. A strange mystery, this of the long, long, long time that has gone by.

When I told her the story of the hound Gelert—"True?"—and described how, after the Prince had discovered that the child was safe, and had turned, full of pity and remorse, to the dying hound, poor Gelert had just strength to lick his hand before falling back dead, the licking of the hand moved her deeply and set her thinking for hours. Next day she wanted to know whether "that Gelert Prince" was still alive. No. Well, the Prince's son? No. *His* son then? No; it was all long, long ago.

It is incomprehensible to her that "every one" should have died so long ago. She does not understand how it happens that even I, venerable as I am, did not know the Druids, or the Saxons, or any of "those old Romans." "You are very old, aren't you, father?—thirty-four?" "I am more than thirty-five, dear!" "That *is* a lot older than me," somewhat dubiously. "Nearly six times." After a long pause: "What was your first little girl's name?" "Violet, dear." "How old would she have been?" "Nearly twenty, dearie." "Did I ever see her, father?" "No, chuck." "Did she ever see me?" N—— Who can tell? Perhaps, perhaps.

All these things appeal strongly to her imagination. What a delight it is to her to hear read for the twentieth time that passage about the giant Atlas in "'The Heroes': "They asked him, and he answered mildly, *pointing to the seaboard with his mighty hand*, 'I can see the Gorgons lying on an island far away; but this youth can never come near them unless he has the hat of darkness.'" And they touch her feelings more nearly than I should have thought. On many occasions we have heard her crying shortly after being tucked up for the night. Some one always goes to her, for it is horrible to leave a child crying in the dark; and the cause of her distress has always been a mysterious pain, which vanishes at the moment any one sits down beside her. One evening, however, I had been reading her "The Wreck of the 'Hesperus,'" and while she

was being put to bed she was telling her mother what a sad story it was—and what should she do if she thought of it in her sleep? Here was a possible clue to her troubles. Ten minutes later we heard the sound of sobbing. It was the pain, she said; the mysterious pain; but I was as certain as though I had been herself that it was

> "The salt sea frozen on her breast,
> The salt tears in her eyes."

Yet another evening she begged me to stay a little while with her, as she was sure she could not fall asleep. The best way for a little girl to fall asleep, I told her—and every little girl ought to know it—is to think she is in a garden, and to gather a lot of moss-roses, and to make a chain of them; and then she must glide away over the grass, without touching it, to a stile in the green fields and wait till she hears a pattering of feet; and, almost immediately, a flock of sheep will pass by, dozens and dozens, and then a flock of lambs, and she must count them every one; and at last a lovely white lamb with a black face will come, and she must throw the rose-chain over its head and trot along beside it till she reaches the daffodil meadows where the dream-tree grows, and the lamb will lie down under the tree, and she must lie down beside it, and the tree will shake down the softest sleep on them, and there will be no waking till daylight comes. Once more, a few minutes later, there was a sound of weeping in the dark. Oh, yes, she *had* counted the sheep and the lambs, every one of them, and had got to the meadows; but one little lamb had stayed behind and had got lost in the mountains, and she could hear it crying for the others.

There is a foolish beatitude in dallying with these childish recollections, but unless I record them now I shall be the poorer to the end of time; they will vanish from memory like that diamond dust of dew which I once saw covering the nasturtium leaves with a magical, iridescent bloom. All during the summer months it has been a joy to see the world through her young eyes. She is a little shepherdess of vagrant facts and fancies, and her crook is a note of interrogation. "What *is* a sponge, father?" she asks. And there is a story of the blue sea-water and the strange jelly-like creature enjoying its dim life on the deep rocks, and the diver, let down from his boat by a rope with a heavy stone at the end to sink him. "Poor sponge!" says W. V., touching it gently. As we go along the fields we see a horse lying down and another standing beside it—both of them as motionless as stone. "They think they are having their photographs taken," says W. V. The yellow of a daisy is of course "the yolk." On a windy May morning "it does the trees good being blown about; it is like a little walk for them." When she sees the plane-tree catkins all fluffed over with wool, she thinks they *are* very like little kittens. Crossing the fields after dusk I tell her that all that white shimmer in the sky is the Milky Way; "Oh, is that why the cows lie out in the grass all night?" After rain I show her how the water streams down the hill and comes away in a succession of little rushes; "It is like a wet wind, isn't it?" she observes. Having modeled an ivy leaf in clay, she wonders whether God would think it pretty good if He saw it; but "it is a pity it isn't green." When the foal springs up from all four hoofs drawn together and goes bounding round in a wild race, "Doesn't he *folâtre*, father?" then in explanation, "that comes in Madame's lesson, *Le poulain folâtre.*"

In the woods in June we gathered tiny green oaklets shooting from fallen acorns, and took them home. By-and-by we shall have oaks of our own, and a swing between them; and if we like we can climb them, for no one will then have any right to shout "Hi! come down, there!" So we planted our prospective woods, and watered them. "They think it is raining," whispered W. V. with a laugh; "they fancy we are all indoors, don't they?" At 7:30 P.M. on the longest day of the year the busiest of bumble-bees is diving into bell after bell of the three foxglove spires in the garden. W. V.'s head just reaches the lowest bell on the purple spire. "Little girls don't grow as fast as foxgloves, do they?" She notices that the bells are speckled inside with irregular reddish-brown freckles on a white ground; "Just like a bird's eggs." This is the only plant in the garden which does not outrun its flower; there is always a fresh bell in blossom at the top; however high it goes, it always takes its joy with it. That will be a thing to tell her when she is older; meanwhile—"I *may* have some of the gloves to put on my fingers, mayn't I, father?"

In July the planet was glorified by the arrival of her Irish terrier. She threw us and creation at large the crumbs from her table, but her heart was bound up in her

"hound." She named him Tan. "Tan," she explained, "is a better name than Dan. Tan is his color. Dan is a sleepy sort of voice (sound). If he had been called Dan, perhaps he would have been sleepy." Seeing the holes in my flower-beds and grass-plot, I wish he had. "He thinks it a world of delight to get outside," she remarks; and she is always somewhat rueful when he has to be left at home. On these occasions Tan knows he is not going, and he races round to the yard-door, where he looks out from a hole at the bottom—one bright dark brown eye and a black muzzle visible—with pleading wistfulness, "Can't I go too?" "Look at One-eye-and-a-nose!" cries W. V. "I don't think he likes that name; his proper name is Tan. It wouldn't be a bad idea to make a poem—

'One-eye-and-a-nose looks out at the gate,'

would it, father? Will you make it?" And she laughs remorselessly; but long before we return her thoughts are with the "hound." The puffing of the train is like his panting; its whistle reminds her of his howl. "I expect he will be seeking for me sorrowfully," she tells me, "but when he sees me all his sorrow will be gone. The dear old thing! You'll pat him, father, won't you?" All which contrasts drolly enough with her own occasional intolerance of tenderness. "Oh, mother, don't kiss me so much; too many kisses spoil the girl!" But then, of course, her love for her "hound" is mixed with savagery. Ever since I taught her the craft of the bow and arrow, Tan (as a wolf) goes in terror for his life. Still, it is worth noting that she continues to kiss the flowers good-night. Do flowers touch her as something more human, something more like herself in color? At any rate, Tan has not superseded them.

Early in the spring it occurred to me to ascertain the range of her vocabulary. I did not succeed, but I came to the conclusion that a child of six, of average intelligence, may be safely credited with a knowledge of at least 2,000 words. A clear practical knowledge, too; for in making up my lists I tried to test how far she had mastered the sense as well as the sound. *Punctual*, she told me, meant "just the time;" *dead*, "when you have left off breathing—and your heart stops beating, too," she added as an afterthought; *messenger*, "anybody who goes and fetches things;" then, as a bee flew past, "a bee is a messenger; he leaves parcels of flower-dust on the sticky things that stand up in a flower." "The pistils?" "Oh yes, pistils and stamens; I remember those old words." *Flame*, she explained, is "the power of the match." What did she mean by "power"? "Oh, well, we have a power of talking;" so that flame, I gather, is a match's way of expressing itself. What was a *hero?* "Perseus was one; a very brave man who could kill a Gorgon." "*Brain* is what you think with in your head; and"—physiological afterthought—"the more you think the more crinkles there are." And *sensible?* "The opposite to silly." And *opposite?* "One at the top" (pointing to the table) "and one at the bottom; they would be opposite." *Lady?* "A woman." But a woman is not always a lady. "If she was *kind* I would know she was a lady." *Noble?* "Stately; a great person. You are the noble of the office, you know, father." "Domino," as an equivalent for "That's done with," has a ring of achievement about it, but "jumbos" in the sense of "lots," "heaps," cannot commend itself even to the worshippers of the immortal elephant. While I linger over these fond trivialities, let me set down one or two of her phrases. "You would laugh me out of my death-bed, mother," she said the other day, when her mother made a remark that greatly tickled her fancy. As the thread twanged while a button was being sewn on her boot, "Auntie, you are making the boot laugh!" "I shall clench my teeth at you, if you won't let me." "Mother, I haven't said my prayers; let me say them on your blessed lap of heaven."

What a little beehive of a brain it is, and what busy, hustling, swarming thoughts and fancies are filling its cells! I told her that God made the heavens and the earth and all things a long, long while ago. "And isn't He dead?"—like the "old Romans" and the others. "I think God must be very clever to make people. We couldn't make ourselves, could we? Is there really a man in the sky who made us?" "Not a man, a great invisible Being." "A Sorcerer? I suppose we have to give Him a name, so we call Him God." And yet at times she is distinctly orthodox. "Do you really love your father?" "Oh yes, father." "Do you worship him?" "I should think not," with a gracious smile. "Why? What is worship?" "You and mother and I and everybody worships God. He is the

greatest King in the world." I was telling her how sternly children were brought up fifty or sixty years ago; how they bowed to their father's empty chair, stood when he entered the room, did not dare speak unless they were spoken to, and always called him "sir." "Did they never say 'father'? Did they not say it on Sundays for a treat?" A little while later, after profound reflection, she asked —"God is very old; does Jesus call Him Father?" "Yes, dear; He always called Him Father." It was only earthly fathers after all who did not suffer their babes to come to them.

Oh, the good summer days when merely to be alive is a delight. How easily we were amused! One could always float needles on a bowl of water—needles? nay, little hostile fleets of ironclads which we manœuvred with magnets, and which rammed each other and went down in wild anachronism, galley and three-decker, off Salamis or Lepanto. Did you ever play at rainbows? It is refreshing on a tropical day; but you need a conservatory with a flagged floor and the sun shining at your back. Then you syringe the inside of the glass roof, and as the showers fall in fine spray, there is the rainbow laughing on the wet pavement! When it is "too hot for anything," W. V. makes a small fire of dry leaves and dead wood under a tree, and we sit beside it making believe it is wet and wintry, and glad at heart that we have a dry nook in a cold world.

Still in the last chilly days of autumn, and afterwards, we have our resources. Regiments of infantry and squadrons of rearing chargers make a gay show, with the red and blue and white of their uniforms reflected on the polished oak table. The drummer-boys beat the charge, the buglers blow. The artillery begins; and Highlanders at the double spin right about face, and horsemen topple over in groups, and there is a mighty slaughter and a dire confusion around the man with the big drum—"his Grace's private drum." Then farewell the plumèd troop and the big wars! We are Vikings now. Here is the atlas and Mercator's projection. W. V. launches her little paper boat with its paper crew, and a snoring breeze carries us through the Doldrums and across the Line, and we double the Cape of Storms and sniff the spices of Taprobane, and—behold the little island where I was born! "That little black spot, father?" "Yes." "Oh, the dear old place!" I am surprised that the old picturesque Mappemonde, with its elephants and camel trains and walled towns and queer-rigged ships, does not interest her. She will enjoy it later.

The day closes in and the curtains are drawn, and I light a solitary candle. As I bring out the globe, she calls laughingly, "Oh, father, you can't carry the world—don't try!" Here we are in the cold of stellar space, with a sun to give us whatever season we want. With her fan she sets a wind blowing over half the planet. She distributes the sunshine in the most capricious fashion. We feel like icy gods in this bleak, blue solitude. "I suppose God made the suns to keep Himself warm." "He made you, dear, to keep me warm, and He made all of us to keep Him warm." She will get the meat out of that nut later. "I wonder what will happen when everybody is dead. Will the world go whirling round and round just as it does now?"

In all these amusements one consideration gives her huge joy: "You ought to be doing your work, oughtn't you, father?" Once, when I admitted that I really ought, she volunteered assistance. "Would it help you, father, if I was to make you a poem?" "Indeed it would, dear." "Well, then, I must think." And after due thought, this was the poem she made me:

"Two little birdies sat on a tree, having a talk with each other. In the room sat a little girl reading away at her picture-book. And in the room, as well, there was a boy playing with his horse and cart. Said one little birdie to the other, how nice it would be if you were a girl and I was a boy." (Hands are dropped full length and swept backward, and she bows.)

This was after the Man came.

Oh, the Man! I have been day-dreaming, and have forgotten the snowy woods, and the tracks of the wild creatures.

This is the story of the Man.

The Man arrived on the fifth of November. As soon as I reached home in the evening, W. V. had her lantern ready to go out Guy-Fawkesing. "I must go and see mother first, dear;" for mother had not been well. "May I go too, father?" "Certainly, dear."

We found mother looking very delicate and very happy. "We are going out to see the bonfires; we shall not be long. Give mother a kiss, dear." As W. V. approached the pillow, the clothes were gently folded back, and there on mother's arm—oh, the wonder and delight of it!—

lay the Man. W. V. gazed, reddened, looked at mother, looked at me, laughed softly, and gave expression to her feelings in a prolonged "Well!"

"You kiss him first, dear, and we'll let the little man get to sleep. He's come a long way, and is very tired."

A darling, a little gem, a dear wee man! She "wanted a boy!" How shockingly ecstatic it all was! For days her thoughts were constantly playing round him. She even forgot to give Tan his biscuits. "Even when I am an old lady I shall always be six and a half years older than Guy; and when Guy is a little old man he will be six and a half years younger than me." The very fire revealed itself in the guise of motherhood: "It has its arms about its baby." Cross-questioned by deponent: "Why, the log is the baby, father. And the fire has yellowy arms."

This was the chance, I thought, of helping her to realize Bethlehem. "The donkey and the cow would be kind to Guy, wouldn't they? They would let no one touch him." "Was Jesus very tiny and pink, too?" "And was God quite pink and tiny?" When I explained that God was not born, had never been a baby at all—"Oh, poor little boy!"

Out of the ox and the ass and Gelert and Guy she speedily made herself a wonderful drama. Watching her round the corner of my book, I saw the following puppet-play enacted, with some subdued mimetic sounds, but without a spoken word.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

A doll, a cardboard dog, a horse ditto.

SCENE I. The doll gets a ride on the dog's back; the horse runs whinnying round the meadow.

SCENE II. The doll asleep; the dog and horse watching. Enter the serpent (a string of beads); crawls stealthily to the doll. The dog barks and bites. The horse jumps on the serpent. The doll wakes. Saved!

To stand and gaze at the Man is bliss; to hold him on her lap for a moment is very heaven. "Tell me what you saw when you came down," she prayed him; but the Man never blinked an eyelid (babes and alligators share this weird faculty). Mother suggested: "I saw a snow-cloud, so I made haste before the snow came." W. V. "guesses" that when *she* came she saw many lovely things, but unhappily she has forgotten them.

My daughter's admiration of my great gifts has always been exhilarating to me. Time was when I cudgeled the loud wind for clattering her windows, and saw that malignant stones and obdurate wood and iron were condignly chastised for hurting her. No one has so much mechanical genius for the mending of her dolls and slain soldiers; no one can tell her such good stories as I; no one makes up such funny poems. Now she contrasted her voice with mine—alas! *she* cannot sing Guy to sleep. Well, let us make a new song and try together:

The creatures are all at rest,
The lark in his grassy furrow,
The crow in his faggoty nest,
And Bunny's asleep in his burrow;
But this little boy——
He is no longer his mother's joy,
For he will not, will not, will not, will not,
will not go to sleep!

Oh yes, if we sing with gentle patience and a sweet *diminuendo*, he always does go to sleep—in the long run.

I do not think there is anything she would not do for the Man. "Father, you will always be a stanch friend to Guy?" Why, naturally, and so must she; she must love him, and help him, and guide him, and be good to him all her life, for there is only one Guy and one W. V. in all the world. She has now caught hold of the notion of the little mother, of considerateness, thoughtfulness, helpfulness, self-denial, self-sacrifice.

Yesterday the little Man noticed a bird painted on a plate and put out his hand. "Fly out, little bird, to Guy!" cried W. V. It was a pretty fancy, and I wrote:

IN CHINA.

With wings green and black and a daffodil breast,
He flies day and night; without song, without rest;
Through summer, through winter—the cloudy, the clear—
Encircling the sun in the round of the year.

But now that it's April and shiny; oh, now
That nests are a-building, and bloom 's on the bough,
Alight, pretty rover, and get you a mate—
Our almond's in blossom—fly *out* of the plate!

But this was not at all successful. There were no almonds in blossom, and it should have been, "Fly out to Guy!"

No almonds in blossom! I know the oaks are "in feathers," as W. V. says, and the Forest is full of snow; yet I feel that the almond is in blossom too.

The Man is sleeping peacefully in his furs, but it is time we were turning for home.

"Then we shan't get any violets this time?" says W. V. with a sly gleam in her eyes.

Oh, little woman, yes; the woods and the world are full of the smell of violets.

THE PARIS GAMIN.

By Th. Bentzon (Madame Blanc).

With drawing by Boutet de Monvel. See frontispiece.

EVERY city has its street boys or Arabs, but Paris has the monopoly of the *gamin;* for he is the product of a special civilization. Indeed, the street alone seems to have borne all the costs of his education. Still, Parisian streets are more suggestive than others; they fill his eyes and his imagination with sights and influences which develop and refine him, either for better or worse, according to his disposition, environing conditions and events. He inhales wit in puffs, while art enters at every pore; he may be lamentably precocious, idle, and even vicious, but he is never coarse in the brutal sense of the word, and never romps or flings about wildly. A pretty young girl is not offended if she is thought to have something of the look of a *gamin*, for that particular look supposes an indefinable compound of roguishness, mischief, and piquancy; and a humorous writer is delighted when his wit is said to have a touch of *gaminerie.*

Gamin, in fact, cannot be translated either by boy, urchin, scamp, or rogue, and yet it is a mixture of all these, together with much besides, all going to make up the ironical, indomitable, and unique creature named, once for all and for posterity, —Gavroche—by Victor Hugo in his great work, "Les Misérables;" although his unconscious sins and sufferings had been pictured still earlier by Eugène Sue in the character of Tortillard, and Jules Janin, with his usual mannerism, had called him "the policeman's butterfly." He is the gay rioter, the mischievous revolutionist, respecting and fearing nothing under the sun, and ever ready at a moment's notice to tear up pavements and build barricades. He is, indeed, the strangest child in France, or in the world, for that matter; good and bad at once, without any surplus animal spirits to work off in rough-and-tumble play; but, on the other hand, having more brains than he knows what to do with; above all else, witty and critical, quizzing everybody and everything—in short, philosophy and good humor personified. He is the young chap who opens your carriage door in front of the theater and waggishly says: "Thanks, Prince," in case your gratuity is slender. It is he, too, who, after dining on two cents' worth of *galette*, his cheap and favorite pastry, puts a bit of cigarette, picked up from the pavement, between his lips, and climbs to the uppermost gallery of the theater to applaud or hiss a melodrama, interrupt the villain, and then go to the stage door to address the popular actor; for *Titi*, as the youngster is called at the "Ambigu" or the "Porte St. Martin" theaters, is a critic to whom a certain kind of authority is granted there. He sets off fire-crackers on the fourteenth of July, throws *confetti* at Carnival time, dangles from the trees and lamp-posts to watch a procession, follows the passing regiment, keeping step with it, or puts all his admiration in the word "Mazette!" when an elegant woman passes him and he turns to gaze at her with the look that Madame Récamier preferred to all compliments.

For he has taste and brilliant fancy, besides being what Americans call "smart," and our journalists frequently borrow his bold and keen wit. Gavarni must certainly have heard him make the remark he puts in the mouth of the funny urchin who, with hands crossed behind his back, stands staring at a stout lady in heavy furs and ample crinoline sailing by him: "What a barge!" No doubt he had seen

Editor's Note.—Madame Blanc—better known, perhaps, by her pen name of "Th. Bentzon"—has long been a member of the staff of the French "Revue des Deux Mondes." (See the June number of McClure's for her interesting account of the "Revue" and its editors.) She is the recognized authority in France on English, and particularly American, literature, which has always been her special interest and study. She has, however, written a large number of novels: novels of purely French life—not the Parisian life which gives its peculiar distinction to the so-called "French school," but the wholesome life of the intelligent and worthy French middle class. As the result of her first visit to the United States, she wrote a book on the "Condition of Women in America," a series of critical essays thoroughly sympathetic and friendly, which has justly attracted wide attention and has been awarded a prize by the French Academy.

him make fun of the "single eyeglass" dandy: "They're a poor lot, anyhow; only got one eye for seein' and can't see out o' that without a skylight!" And he must have written down his criticism of a lady's very thin legs on a windy day: "Say, where did you get your tenpins?" He has illustrated his impudence by making him carelessly address a passing gentleman, disfigured by smallpox, with a "Why didn't you take out an insurance policy against hail?" and by making him say to himself, after a low whistle, on meeting a man with an unusually long nose: "I guess he got up before breakfast the day noses were handed round!" All this free and easy impudence, flung off with inimitable accent and gestures, belongs specially to the *gamin de Paris*.

The great actor Bouffé and the greater actress Déjazet transferred the *gamin's* quaint and amusing peculiarities to the stage with endless and unvarying success, and he always holds his own at Guignol, the French Punch and Judy show, on the Champs Elysées. There are four of these small puppet booths under the clumps of trees in the neighborhood of the President's residence, the Elysée, four tiny theaters fully exposed to view, with neither roof nor inclosure for their spectators, simply a few rows of chairs, where maids and nurses sit with their young charges, while behind them there are always a number of *gamins* who, as they occupy "standing room only," do not pay, and nevertheless enjoy every good point made. The smallest, plainest, and oldest of these booths is by far more popular than the others, and alone bears the title, *par excellence*, of "Guignol." It permits its modern rivals, "Bambochinet," "Gringalet," or whatever they choose to call themselves, boasting of richer decorations, and a more numerous troupe of actors, with more perfectly jointed limbs; but Polichinelle, the constable, and the two traditional Guignols, father and son, the latter a *gamin*, belong to the oldest booth, and sufficiently explain a popularity which has lasted for several generations.

The legless actors, seen only to the waist, are moved by means of three fingers, and the "squeaker," a little tin instrument in the invisible showman's mouth, produces very amusing varieties of shrill or hoarse voices, with that genuine Parisian drawl and throaty roll of the letter *R* called *grasseyement*. Young Guignol, the *gamin*, wears a blue linen blouse, a leather belt, and his cap awry. He surpasses even Polichinelle in squabbling with the landlord whom his father refuses to pay, and in playing tricks on the constable sent to arrest the family and lead them off to prison. The two representatives of law and order are invariably clubbed and circumvented, to the delirious joy of the young spectators, and they applaud Guignol's success with all their might.

In fact, both the *gamin*, from his earliest days, as well as the French Punch, have a strong tendency to oppose the ruling powers, although this opposition is usually limited to making a noise.

He may, however, become a much more seriously conspicuous figure in revolutionary times, and far more than a mere nuisance, even going as far as burning down buildings "for fun," as he did, alas! during the Commune. Yet we must add that he is just as likely to die at thirteen, like little Bara, shouting "Vive la république!" when "Vive le roi!" would have saved his life.

One of Charlet's splendid drawings shows two *gamins*, six or seven years old, in rags, under their newspaper *soldier hats*, their wooden swords at their side, playing at "war" and shouting: "The guard dies, but does not surrender!"

The *gamin* has always been infatuated with "the Little Corporal" in his gray overcoat, but he, however, not being logical, is fond of liberty. Delacroix has painted him black with gunpowder under his torn cap, standing, pistol in hand, on one of the street barricades during the revolution of 1830. In 1848 we saw him scale the very throne of Louis Philippe at the Tuileries, and have himself carried about on it in triumph. Always impulsive, he is as ready to save as to destroy, and will leap into the Seine to rescue a drowning child of his own age without ever stopping to think whether he knows how to swim or not.

What is he doing when not playing tops or marbles in the gutter? Sometimes he is a plasterer's help, and so powdered with white dust as to seem Pierrot himself; sometimes an apprentice in a green linen apron; or a pastry-cook's boy, clothed in a questionably white cotton suit from head to heels, balancing his basket on his head as he saunters along; or a printer's "devil" in blouse and paper cap; or he pushes a hand-cart, or sells flowers, newspapers, matches, etc.; or he may join the army of young telegraph messengers. He may,

by chance, rise to the position of errand-boy in a lawyer's office, or even soar to the elegance of a painter's *rapin*.

Who knows what his future may be? There are painters and sculptors who began by sweeping studios, and some of these *gamins* have quick and bright minds and clever hands; they catch everything on the wing, and assimilate it without taking the trouble to study. There are others, nevertheless, who, after having tried several trades, follow none of them, but pass from loafing to idleness, turn out badly, and finally are arrested for misdemeanors. Some of them, true to their instincts, manage to be amusing even when on trial, by their cynicism under the unfortunate circumstances.

Usually puny in appearance—for misery has been his foster-mother—the *gamin* seems younger than he is; this adds a spice to his remarks, which he scatters about him like fireworks. His sharp, sneering features, utterly devoid of the least trace of innocence, can be seen in every crowd, at every public demonstration. He hums the newest tunes, learns all that is going on, and gleans enough to form an opinion on politics by glancing at the newspapers exposed for sale. General Boulanger was his idol. He can be seen walking impudently into confectioners' shops, where he asks for stale cakes, and they are rarely refused him. If he is the owner of two cents, the chestnut-roaster may be sure of his early visit, and his piping-hot dinner is easily carried away in a paper cornucopia. As far as school is concerned, he prefers playing truant. Compulsory education has put a stop to that in a certain measure, and will probably modify the type by degrees. But the genuine *gamin* is always ready to run away from *hard duty*, and continues to be the special model of the incorrigible city lounger and idler. In spite of all this, as he grows older he often develops into a good workman or soldier, unless he has become a good-for-nothing too early; for no more impressionable or mobile imagination than his can be found anywhere, or one more easily carried to extremes.

The very considerable number of criminals under twenty, who are a characteristic feature of these times, would seem to prove that even though he may lose some of his drollness and picturesqueness thereby, the *gamin* needs to be disciplined and curbed. Otherwise Gavroche will finally increase the battalion of young blackguards who, after all, are really nothing but unfledged gallows-birds.

THE FIRST MEETING OF LINCOLN AND GRANT.

By Hamlin Garland.

An account based on the testimony of eye-witnesses, Grant's own account, Congressional reports, and other original documents.

JUST as Grant's success at Vicksburg had brought him to the command of the armies in the West, so his superb campaign at Chattanooga led to the thought that he was the one man in America to command in the East. Rightly or wrongly, the feeling grew that the leaders of movements in the East were insufficient. Grant was the man. Make him commander-in-chief in place of Halleck.

Halleck professed entire willingness to be deposed in Grant's favor. He said: "I took it against my will and shall be most happy to leave it as soon as another is designated to fill it. . . . We have no time to quibble and contend for pride of personal opinion. On this subject there appears to be a better feeling among the officers of the West than here."

In general the demand was that Grant should lead the Army of the Potomac against Lee. But a larger scheme was on foot. Washburne introduced into Congress a bill reviving the grade of lieutenant-general, which had died with Washington, though General Scott had borne it by brevet. To the ebullient patriots of the lower house nothing was now too good for General Grant, and the bill was received with applause. There was no concealment of their wishes. They recommended Grant by name for the honor.

Washburne took much pride in his early advocacy of Grant, and called on his colleagues to witness whether his *protégé* had not more than fulfilled all prophecies. "He has fought more battles and won more victories than any man living. He

has captured more prisoners and taken more guns than any general of modern times." The bill passed the lower house by a vote of ninety-six to fifty-two, and the Senate with but six dissenting votes. In the Senate, however, the recommendation of Grant was stricken out, although it was suggested that the President might appoint some one else to the new rank instead of Grant.

But the President was impatient to put Grant into the high place. He had himself had to plan battles and adjudicate between rival commanders, in addition to his presidential duties, until he was worn out. With a profound sigh of relief he signed the bill and nominated General Grant to be the Lieutenant-General of the Armies of the United States.

Grant was at Nashville when an order came from the Secretary of War directing him to report in person to the War Department. His first thought seems to have been of Sherman, and his next of McPherson. On March 4, 1864, in a private letter, he wrote:

Dear Sherman: The bill reviving the grade of Lieutenant-General in the army has become a law, and my name has been sent to the Senate for the place. I now receive orders to report to Washington in person, which indicates either a confirmation or a likelihood of confirmation. I start in the morning to comply with the order; but I shall say very distinctly on my arrival there, that I accept no appointment which will require me to make that city my headquarters. This, however, is not what I started to write about.

Whilst I have been eminently successful in this war in at least gaining the confidence of the public, no one feels more than I how much of this success is due to the skill and energy, and the harmonious putting forth of that energy and skill, of those whom it has been my good fortune to have occupying a subordinate position under me.

There are many officers to whom these remarks are applicable to a greater or less degree, proportionate to their ability as soldiers; but what I want is to express my thanks to you and McPherson as the men to whom, above all others, I feel indebted for whatever I have had of success. How far your advice and suggestions have been of service you know. How far your execution of whatever has been given you to do entitles you to the reward I am receiving, you cannot know as well as I. I feel all the gratitude this letter can express, giving it the most flattering construction.

The word "you" I use in the plural, intending it for McPherson also. I should write him, and will some day; but starting in the morning, I do not know that I will find time now.

To this modest, manly, and deeply grateful letter Sherman replied in kind. The friendship between these three men was of the most noble and unselfish character, difficult to parallel. Sherman said:

Dear General: You do yourself injustice and us too much honor in assigning to us too large a share of the merits which have led to your high advancements. . . . You are Washington's legitimate successor, and occupy a place of almost dangerous elevation; but if you can continue, as heretofore, to be yourself, simple, honest, and unpretending, you will enjoy through life the respect and love of friends and the homage of millions of human beings that will award you a large share in securing them and their descendants a government of law and stability. . . .

Until you had won Donelson I confess I was almost cowed by the terrible array of anarchical elements that presented themselves at every point; but that admitted the ray of light which I have followed ever since.

I believe you are as brave, patriotic, and just as the great prototype Washington; as unselfish, kind-hearted, and honest as a man should be; but the chief characteristic is the simple faith in success you have always manifested, which I can liken to nothing else than the faith a Christian has in a Saviour. This faith gave you victory at Shiloh and Vicksburg. Also, when you have completed your last preparations, you go into battle without hesitation, as at Chattanooga, no doubts, no reserves; and I tell you it was this that made us act with confidence. I knew wherever I was that you thought of me, and if I got in a tight place you would come if alive.

Now as to the future. Don't stay in Washington. Halleck is better qualified than you to stand the buffets of intrigue and policy. Come west. Take to yourself the whole Mississippi Valley. . . . Here lies the seat of coming empire, and from the West, when our tasks are done, we will make short work of Charleston and Richmond and the impoverished coast of the Atlantic.

With some such feeling in his own heart General Grant went to Washington to report to the War Department and to see Lincoln, whom up to this time he had never met. Of intrigue and jealousy he was aware the Western army had enough, but he knew they were weak and mild compared to the division and bitterness at the East. He had no fear of Lee—he was eager to meet him—but he feared the politicians, the schemes, the influences of the capital. He went with the intention of returning to Chattanooga at once and making it his headquarters.

He arrived in Washington late in the afternoon, and went at once to a hotel. As he modestly asked for a room the clerk loftily said, "I have nothing but a room on the top floor."

"Very well, that will do," said Grant, registering his name.

The clerk gave one glance at the name, and nearly leaped over the desk in his eagerness to place the best rooms in the house at Grant's disposal.

As Grant entered the dining-room, some one said, "Who is that major-general?" His shoulder-straps had betrayed him.

The inquiry spread till some one recognized him. "Why, that is Lieutenant-General Grant!"

A cry arose—"Grant—Grant—Grant!" The guests sprang to their feet, wild with excitement. "Where is he?" "Which is he?"

Some one proposed three cheers for Grant, and when they were given, Grant was forced to rise and bow, and then the crowd began to surge toward him. He was unable to finish his dinner, and fled.

Accompanied by Senator Cameron of Pennsylvania, he went to the White House to report to the President. Doubtless he would not have gone had he known that the President was holding a reception, for he was in his every-day uniform, which was considerably worn and faded. The word had passed swiftly that Grant was in town and that he would call upon the President; therefore the crowd was denser than usual. They did not recognize him at first; but as the news spread, a curious murmur arose, and those who stood beside the President heard it and turned toward the door. As Grant entered, a hush fell over the room. The crowd moved back, and left the two chief men of all the nation facing each other.

Lincoln took Grant's small hand heartily in his big clasp, and said, "I'm glad to see you, General."

It was an impressive meeting. There stood the supreme executive of the nation and the chief of its armies—the one tall, gaunt, almost formless, with wrinkled, warty face, and deep, sorrowful eyes; the other compact, of good size, but looking small beside the tall President, his demeanor modest, almost timid, but in the broad, square head and in the close-clipped lips showing decision, resolution, and unconquerable bravery. In some fateful way these two men, both born in humble conditions, far from the esthetic, the superfine, the scholarly, now stood together—the rail-splitter and the prop-hauler. In their hands was more power for good than any kings on earth possessed. They came of the West, but they stood for the whole nation and for the Union and for the rights of man. The striking together of their hands in a compact to put down rebellion and free the blacks was perceived to be one of the supremest moments of our history.

For only an instant they stood there. Grant passed on into the East Room, where the crowd flung itself upon him. He was cheered wildly, and the room was jammed with people, crazy to touch his hands. He was forced to stand on a sofa and show himself. He blushed like a girl. The handshaking brought streams of perspiration from his forehead and over his face. The hot room and the crowd and the excitement swelled every vein in his brow, till he looked more like a soldier fighting for his life than a hero in a drawing-room. There was something delightfully diffident and fresh and unspoiled about him, and words of surprise gave way to phrases of affection. He was seen to be the plain man his friends claimed him to be: homespun, unaffected, sincere, and resolute.

He was relieved at last by the approach of a messenger to call him to Mrs. Lincoln's side. With her he made a tour of the room, followed by the President with a lady on his arm, Lincoln's rugged face beaming with amused interest in his new general-in-chief. This ended Grant's sufferings for the moment. The President, upon reaching comparative privacy, said:

"I am to formally present you with your commission to-morrow morning at ten o'clock. I know, General, your dread of speaking, so I shall read what I have to say. It will only be four or five sentences. I would like you to say something in reply which will soften the feeling of jealousy among the officers and encourage the nation."

At last the general escaped from the close air of the room, and as he felt the cool wind on his face outside the White House, he wiped the sweat from his brow, drew a long breath of relief, and said: "I hope that ends the show business."

There were solemnity and a marked formality in the presentation of the commission. In the presence of his cabinet, the President rose and stood facing General Grant, beside whom was his little son and the members of his staff. From a slip of paper the President read these words:

General Grant: The nation's appreciation of what you have done, and its reliance upon you for what remains to be done, in the existing great struggle, are now presented with this commission constituting you Lieutenant-General in the Army of the United States. With this high honor devolves upon you, also, a corresponding responsibility. As the country herein trusts you, so, under God, it will sustain you. I scarcely need to add, that with what I here speak goes my own hearty concurrence.

General Grant's reply was equally simple, but his hands shook, and he found some difficulty in controling his voice.

Mr. President: I accept the commission, with gratitude for the high honor conferred. With the aid of the noble armies that have fought in so many fields for our common country, it will be my earnest endeavor not to disappoint your expectations. I feel the full weight of the responsibilities now devolving upon me; and I know that if they are met it will be due to those armies and, above all, to the favor of that Providence which leads both nations and men.

The two men again shook hands. Lincoln seemed to be profoundly pleased with Grant. He found in him one of his own people, suited to his own conception of an American citizen: a man of "the plain people," whom, he said, God must have loved, He made so many of them. He liked Grant's modesty, and was too shrewd to call it weakness. He had tried handsome and dashing generals, and big and learned generals, and cautious and strategic generals, and generals who filled a uniform without a wrinkle, and who glittered and gleamed on the parade and had voices like golden bugles, and who could walk the polished floor of a ball-room with the grace of a dancing-master; and generals bearded and circumspect and severe. Now he was to try a man who despised show, who never drew his sabre or raised his voice or danced attendance upon women; a shy, simple-minded, reticent man, who fought battles with one sole purpose to put down the rebellion and restore peace to the nation; a man who executed orders swiftly, surely, and expected the like obedience in others; a man who hated politics and despised trickery.

A heavy rain was falling the second day of Grant's stay in Washington, but he did not allow it to interfere with his work. All day he rode about visiting the fortifications. That night he dined with Secretary Seward, delighting everybody by his simple directness of manner. He said little, but every word counted. The city was mad to see him. All day crowds surged to and fro in the hope of catching a momentary glimpse of him. A thousand invitations to dine were waiting him; but he kept under cover, and the next day he started for the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac. He spent one day in swift, absorbed study of the situation. The day after, he returned to Washington and started for Nashville to arrange his affairs there so that he could return East. He had found it necessary to take command of the Army of the Potomac in person, or at least to make his headquarters in the field with it. He told the President that nine days would enable him to put his Western command in shape to leave it.

This intent, undeviating, and unhesitating action was a revelation of power to the East. The New York "Tribune" said: "He hardly slept on his long journey East, yet he went to work at once. Senators state with joy that he is not going to hire a house in Washington and make war ridiculous by attempting to manœuver battles from an armchair in Washington." His refusal to dine and to lend himself to any "show business" was commented on with equal joy. The citizens of Washington could scarcely believe he had visited the city at all. The New York "Herald" said: "We have found our hero."

Returning to Nashville, he quickly made his dispositions. His own command there, Sherman was to take; and McPherson, Sherman's, while Logan moved into McPherson's command. These men Grant felt that he could trust absolutely, and though disappointed rivals complained severely, it made no difference. Promptly at the end of his nine days he was back in Washington.

On the day of his return he held his first interview with Lincoln alone. Lincoln said, in his half-humorous fashion: "I have never professed to be a military man, nor to know how campaigns should be conducted, and never wanted to interfere in them. But procrastination on the part of generals, and the pressure of the people at the North and of Congress, which is always with one, have forced me into issuing a series of military orders. I don't know but they were all wrong, and I'm pretty certain some of them were. All I wanted, or ever wanted, is some one to take the responsibility and *act*—and call on me for all assistance needed. I pledge myself to use all the power of government in rendering such assistance." *That* was the substance of the interview, Grant replying simply: "I will do the best I can, Mr. President, with the means at hand." He went straight to headquarters at Culpeper, and the newspapers delightedly quoted him as saying on his arrival: "There will be no grand review and no show business."

Lincoln said later, in reply to a question: "I don't know General Grant's plans, and I don't want to know them. Thank God, I've got a general at last!"

ST. IVES.

THE ADVENTURES OF A FRENCH PRISONER IN ENGLAND

By Robert Louis Stevenson,

Author of "Treasure Island," "Kidnapped," etc.

BEGUN IN THE MARCH NUMBER—SUMMARY OF EARLIER CHAPTERS.

Viscount Anne de St. Ives, under the name of Champdivers, while held a prisoner of war in Edinburgh Castle, attracts the sympathy of Flora Gilchrist, who, out of curiosity, visits the prisoners, attended by her brother Ronald. On her account St. Ives kills a comrade, Goguelat, in a duel, fought secretly in the night, with the divided blades of a pair of scissors. An officer of the prison, Major Chevenix, discovers the secret of the duel and of St. Ives's interest in the young lady: a fact that promises importance later. Having escaped from prison, St. Ives plans to proceed to a rich uncle in England, Count de Kéroual, who, as he has learned from a solicitor, Daniel Romaine, is near dying, and is likely to make him his heir in place of a cousin, Alain de St. Ives. First, however, he steals to the home of Flora Gilchrist. Discovered there by the aunt with whom Flora lives, he is regarded with suspicion; but still is helped to escape across the border, under the guidance of two drovers. Thus he comes to one Burchell Fenn, whose business is to help French fugitives southward. He continues his journey in Fenn's cart, with two fellow-countrymen, a colonel and a major. The colonel dies by the way. Then, in an inn, St. Ives and the major run up against a suspicious attorney's clerk, who would arrest them. As soon as they can, they separately flee from the inn.

CHAPTER XV.—*Continued.*

THE ADVENTURE OF THE ATTORNEY'S CLERK.

I WAS scarce clear of the inn before the limb of the law was at my heels. I saw his face plain in the moonlight; and the most resolute purpose showed in it, along with an unmoved composure. A chill went over me. "This is no common adventure," thinks I to myself. "You have got hold of a man of character, St. Ives! A bite-hard, a bull-dog, a weasel is on your trail; and how are you to throw him off?" Who was he? By some of his expressions I judged he was a hanger-on of courts. But in what character had he followed the assizes? As a simple spectator, as a lawyer's clerk, as a criminal himself, or—last and worst supposition—as a Bow-Street "runner"?

The cart would wait for me, perhaps, half a mile down our onward road, which I was already following. And I told myself that in a few minutes' walking, Bow-Street runner or not, I should have him at my mercy. And then reflection came to me in time. Of all things, one was out of the question. Upon no account must this obtrusive fellow see the cart. Until I had killed or shook him off, I was quite divorced from my companions—alone, in the midst of England, on a frosty by-way leading whither I knew not, with a sleuth-hound at my heels, and never a friend but the holly-stick!

We came at the same time to a crossing of lanes. The branch to the left was overhung with trees, deeply sunken and dark. Not a ray of moonlight penetrated its recesses; and I took it at a venture. The wretch followed my example in silence; and for some time we crunched together over frozen pools without a word. Then he found his voice, with a chuckle.

"This is not the way to Mr. Merton's," said he.

"No?" said I. "It is mine, however."

"And therefore mine," said he.

Again we fell silent; and we may thus have covered half a mile before the lane, taking a sudden turn, brought us forth again into the moonshine. With his hooded great-coat on his back, his valise in his hand, his black wig adjusted, and footing it on the ice with a sort of sober doggedness of manner, my enemy was changed almost beyond recognition: changed in everything but a certain dry, polemical, pedantic air, that spoke of a sedentary occupation and high stools. I observed, too, that his valise was heavy; and putting this and that together, hit upon a plan.

"A seasonable night, sir," said I,

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"What do you say to a bit of running? The frost has me by the toes."

"With all the pleasure in life," says he.

His voice seemed well assured, which pleased me little. However, there was nothing else to try, except violence, for which it would always be too soon. I took to my heels, accordingly, he after me; and for some time the slapping of our feet on the hard road might have been heard a mile away. He had started a pace behind me, and he finished in the same position. For all his extra years and the weight of his valise, he had not lost a hair's breadth. Another might race him for me—I had enough of it!

And, besides, to run so fast was contrary to my interests. We could not run long without arriving somewhere. At any moment we might turn a corner and find ourselves at the lodge-gate of some Squire Merton, in the midst of a village whose constable was sober, or in the hands of a patrol. There was no help for it—I must finish with him on the spot, as long as it was possible. I looked about me, and the place seemed suitable: never a light, never a house—nothing but stubble-fields, fallows, and a few stunted trees. I stopped and eyed him in the moonlight with an angry stare.

"Enough of this foolery!" said I.

He had turned, and now faced me full, very pale, but with no sign of shrinking.

"I am quite of your opinion," said he. "You have tried me at the running; you can try me next at the high jump. It will be all the same. It must end the one way."

I made my holly whistle about my head.

"I believe you know what way!" said I. "We are alone, it is night, and I am wholly resolved. Are you not frightened?"

"No," he said, "not in the smallest. I do not box, sir; but I am not a coward, as you may have supposed. Perhaps it will simplify our relations if I tell you at the outset that I walk armed."

Quick as lightning I made a feint at his head; as quickly he gave ground, and at the same time I saw a pistol glitter in his hand.

"No more of that, Mr. French-Prisoner!" he said. "It will do me no good to have your death at my door."

"Faith, nor me either!" said I; and I lowered my stick and considered the man, not without a twinkle of admiration. "You see," I said, "there is one consideration that you appear to overlook: there are a great many chances that your pistol may miss fire."

"I have a pair," he returned. "Never travel without a brace of barkers."

"I make you my compliment," said I. "You are able to take care of yourself, and that is a good trait. But, my good man, let us look at this matter dispassionately. You are not a coward, and no more am I; we are both men of excellent sense; I have good reason, whatever it may be, to keep my concerns to myself and to walk alone. Now, I put it to you pointedly, am I likely to stand it? Am I likely to put up with your continued and—excuse me—highly impudent *ingérence* into my private affairs?"

"Another French word," says he composedly.

"Oh! bother your French words!" cried I. "You seem to be a Frenchman yourself!"

"I have had many opportunities, by which I have profited," he explained. "Few men are better acquainted with the similarities and differences, whether of idiom or accent, of the two languages."

"You are a pompous fellow, too!" said I.

"Oh, I can make distinctions, sir," says he. "I can talk with Bedfordshire peasants; and I can express myself becomingly, I hope, in the company of a gentleman of education like yourself."

"If you set up to be a gentleman—" I began.

"Pardon me!" he interrupted. "I make no such claim. I only see the nobility and gentry in the way of business. I am quite a plain person."

"Come," I exclaimed, "set my mind at rest upon one point. In the name of mystery, who and what are you?"

"I have no cause to be ashamed of my name, sir," said he; "nor yet my trade. I am Thomas Dudgeon, at your service, clerk to Mr. Daniel Romaine, solicitor of London; High Holborn is our address, sir."

It was only by the ecstasy of the relief that I knew how horribly I had been frightened. I flung my stick on the road.

"Romaine?" I cried. "Daniel Romaine? An old hunks with a red face and a big head, and got up like a Quaker? My dear friend, to my arms!"

"Keep back, I say!" said Dudgeon weakly.

I would not listen to him. With the end of my own alarm, I felt as if I must infallibly be at the end of all dangers likewise;

as if the pistol that he held in one hand were no more to be feared than the valise that he carried with the other and now put up like a barrier against my advance.

"Keep back, or I declare I will fire," he was crying. "Have a care! My pistol—"

He might scream as he pleased. Willy nilly, I folded him to my breast, I pressed him there, I kissed his ugly mug as it had never been kissed before and would never be kissed again; and in the doing so knocked his wig awry and his hat off. He bleated in my embrace; so bleats the sheep in the arms of the butcher. The whole thing, on looking back, appears incomparably reckless and absurd; I no better than a madman for offering to advance on Dudgeon, and he no better than a fool for not shooting me while I was about it. But all's well that ends well; or, as the people in these days kept singing and whistling on the streets:

"There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft
And looks out for the life of poor Jack."

"There!" said I, releasing him a little, but still keeping my hands on his shoulders, "*je vous ai bel et bien embrassé*—and, as you would say, there is another French word." With his wig over one eye, he looked incredibly rueful and put out. "Cheer up, Dudgeon; the ordeal is over, you shall be embraced no more. But do, first of all, put away your pistol; you handle it as if it were a cockatrice; some time or other, depend upon it, it will certainly go off. Here is your hat. No, let me put it on square, and the wig before it. Never suffer any stress of circumstances to come between you and the duty you owe to yourself. If you have nobody else to dress for, dress for God!

Put your wig straight
On your bald pate,
Keep your chin scraped,
And your figure draped.

Can you match me that? The whole duty of man in a quatrain! And remark, I do not set up to be a professional bard; these are the outpourings of a *dilettante*."

"But, my dear sir!" he exclaimed.

"But, my dear sir!" I echoed, "I will allow no man to interrupt the flow of my ideas. Give me your opinion on my quatrain, or I vow we shall have a quarrel of it."

"Certainly you are quite an original," he said.

"Quite," said I; "and I believe I have my counterpart before me."

"Well, for a choice," says he, smiling, "and whether for sense or poetry, give me

'Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow:
The rest is all but leather and prunello.'"

"Oh, but that's not fair—that's Pope! It's not original, Dudgeon. Understand me," said I, wringing his breast-button, "the first duty of all poetry is to be mine, sir—mine. Inspiration now swells in my bosom, because—to tell you the plain truth, and descend a little in style—I am greatly relieved at the turn things have taken. So, I dare say, are you yourself, Dudgeon, if you would only allow it. And *à propos*, let me ask you a home question. Between friends, have you ever fired that pistol?"

"Why, yes, sir," he replied. "Twice—at hedgesparrows."

"And you would have fired at me, you bloody-minded man?" I cried.

"If you go to that, you seemed mighty reckless with your stick," said Dudgeon.

"Did I indeed? Well, well, 'tis all past history; ancient as King Pharamond—which is another French word, if you cared to accumulate more evidence," says I. "But happily we are now the best of friends, and have all our interests in common."

"You go a little too fast, if you'll excuse me, Mr. —— I do not know your name, that I am aware," said Dudgeon.

"No, to be sure!" said I. "Never heard of it!"

"A word of explanation—" he began.

"No, Dudgeon!" I interrupted. "Be practical; I know what you want, and the name of it is supper. *Rien ne creuse comme l'émotion.* I am hungry myself, and yet I am more accustomed to warlike palpitations than you, who are but a hunter of hedgesparrows. Let me look at your face critically: your bill of fare is three slices of cold rare roast beef, a Welsh rabbit, a pot of stout, and a glass or two of sound tawny port, old in bottle—the right milk of Englishmen." Methought there seemed a brightening in his eye and a melting about his mouth at this enumeration.

"The night is young," I continued; "not much past eleven, for a wager. Where can we find a good inn? And remark that I say *good*, for the port must be up to the occasion—not a headache in a pipe of it."

"Really, sir," he said, smiling a little, "you have a way of carrying things—"

"Will nothing make you stick to the subject?" I cried. "You have the most irrelevant mind! How do you expect to rise in your profession? The inn?"

"Well, I will say you are a facetious gentleman!" said he. "You must have your way, I see. We are not three miles from Bedford by this very road."

"Done!" cried I. "Bedford be it!"

I tucked his arm under mine, possessed myself of the valise, and walked him off unresisting. Presently we came to an open piece of country lying a thought down hill. The road was smooth and free of ice, the moonshine thin and bright over the meadows and the leafless trees. I was now honestly done with the purgatory of the covered cart; I was close to my great-uncle's; I had no more fear of Mr. Dudgeon; which were all grounds enough for jollity. And I was aware, besides, of us two as of a pair of tiny and solitary dolls under the vast frosty cupola of the midnight; the rooms decked, the moon burnished, the least of the stars lighted, the floor swept and waxed, and nothing wanting but for the band to strike up and the dancing to begin. In the exhilaration of my heart I took the music on myself—

> "Merrily danced the Quaker's wife,
> And merrily danced the Quaker."

I broke into that animated and appropriate air, clapped my arm about Dudgeon's waist, and away down the hill at a dancing step! He hung back a little at the start, but the impulse of the tune, the night, and my example were not to be resisted. A man made of putty must have danced, and even Dudgeon showed himself to be a human being. Higher and higher were the capers that we cut; the moon repeated in shadow our antic footsteps and gestures; and it came over my mind of a sudden—really like balm—what appearance of man I was dancing with, what a long bilious countenance he had shown under his shaven pate, and what a world of trouble the rascal had given me in the immediate past.

Presently we began to see the lights of Bedford. My Puritanic companion stopped and disengaged himself.

"This is a trifle *infra dig.*, sir, is it not?" said he. "A party might suppose we had been drinking."

"And so you shall be, Dudgeon," said I. "You shall not only be drinking, you old hypocrite, but you shall be drunk—dead drunk, sir—and the boots shall put you to bed! We'll warn him when we go in. Never neglect a precaution; never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day!"

But he had no more frivolity to complain of. We finished our stage and came to the inn door with decorum, to find the house still alight and in a bustle with many late arrivals; to give our orders with a prompt severity which ensured obedience, and to be served soon after at a side-table, close to the fire, and in a blaze of candle-light, with such a meal as I had been dreaming of for days past. For days, you are to remember, I had been skulking in the covered cart, a prey to cold, hunger, and an accumulation of discomforts that might have daunted the most brave; and the white table napery, the bright crystal, the reverberation of the fire, the red curtains, the Turkey carpet, the portraits on the coffee-room wall, the placid faces of the two or three late guests who were silently prolonging the pleasures of digestion, and (last, but not by any means least) a glass of an excellent light dry port, put me in a humor only to be described as heavenly. The thought of the colonel, of how he would have enjoyed this snug room and roaring fire, and of his cold grave in the wood by Market Bosworth, lingered on my palate, *a mari aliqua*, like an after-taste, but was not able—I say it with shame—entirely to dispel my self-complacency. After all, in this world every dog hangs by its own tail. I was a free adventurer, who had just brought to a successful end—or, at least, within view of it—an adventure very difficult and alarming; and I looked across at Mr. Dudgeon, as the port rose to his cheeks, and a smile, that was semi-confidential and a trifle foolish, began to play upon his leathery features, not only with composure, but with a suspicion of kindness. The rascal had been brave, a quality for which I would value any one; and if he had been pertinacious in the beginning, he had more than made up for it before the end.

"And now, Dudgeon, to explain," I began. "I know your master, he knows me, and he knows and approves of my errand. So much I may tell you, that I am on my way to Amersham Place."

"Oho!" quoth Dudgeon, "I begin to see."

"I am heartily glad of it," said I, passing the bottle, "because that is about all I can tell. You must take my word for the remainder. Either believe me, or don't. If you don't, let's take a chaise;

you can carry me to-morrow to High Holborn, and confront me with Mr. Romaine; the result of which will be to set your mind at rest—and to make the holiest disorder in your master's plans. If I judge you aright (for I find you a shrewd fellow), this will not be at all to your mind. You know what a subordinate gets by officiousness; if I can trust my memory, old Romaine has not at all the face that I should care to see in anger; and I venture to predict surprising results upon your weekly salary—if you are paid by the week, that is. In short, let me go free, and 'tis an end of the matter; take me to London, and 'tis only a beginning—and, by my opinion, a beginning of troubles. You can take your choice."

"And that is soon taken," said he. "Go to Amersham to-morrow, or wherever you will—I wash my hands of you and the whole transaction. No, you don't find me putting my head in between Romaine and a client! A good man of business, sir, but hard as millstone grit. I might get the sack, and I shouldn't wonder! But, it's a pity, too," he added, and sighed, shook his head, and took his glass off sadly.

"That reminds me," said I. "I have a great curiosity, and you can satisfy it. Why were you so forward to meddle with poor Mr. Dubois? Why did you transfer your attentions to me? And, generally, what induced you to make yourself such a nuisance?"

He blushed deeply.

"Why, sir," says he, "there *is* such a thing as patriotism, I hope."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HOME-COMING OF MR. ROWLEY'S VISCOUNT.

By eight the next morning Dudgeon and I had made our parting. By that time we had grown to be extremely familiar; and I would very willingly have kept him by me, and even carried him to Amersham Place. But it appeared he was due at the public-house where we had met, on some affairs of my great-uncle the Count, who had an outlying estate in that part of the shire. If Dudgeon had had his way the night before, I should have been arrested on my uncle's land and by my uncle's agent, a culmination of ill-luck.

A little after noon I started, in a hired chaise, by way of Dunstable. The mere mention of the name Amersham Place made every one supple and smiling. It was plainly a great house, and my uncle lived there in style. The fame of it rose as we approached, like a chain of mountains; at Bedford they touched their caps, but in Dunstable they crawled upon their bellies. I thought the landlady would have kissed me; such a flutter of cordiality, such smiles, such affectionate attentions were called forth, and the good lady bustled on my service in such a pother of ringlets and with such a jingling of keys. "You're probably expected, sir, at the Place? I do trust you may 'ave better accounts of his lordship's 'elth, sir. We understood that his lordship, Mosha de Carwell, was main bad. Ha, sir, we shall all feel his loss, poor, dear, noble gentleman; and I'm sure nobody more polite! They do say, sir, his wealth is enormous, and before the Revolution quite a prince in his own country! But I beg your pardon, sir; 'ow I do run on, to be sure; and doubtless all beknown to you already! For you do resemble the family, sir. I should have known you anywheres by the likeness to the dear viscount. Ha, poor gentleman, he must 'ave a 'eavy 'eart these days."

In the same place I saw out of the inn windows a man-servant passing in the livery of my house, which you are to think I had never before seen worn, or not that I could remember. I had often enough, indeed, pictured myself advanced to be a Marshal, a Duke of the Empire, a Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor, and some other kickshaws of the kind, with a perfect rout of flunkeys correctly dressed in my own colors. But it is one thing to imagine, and another to see. It would be one thing to have these liveries in a house of my own in Paris; it was quite another to find them flaunting in the heart of hostile England; and I fear I should have made a fool of myself, if the man had not been on the other side of the street and I at a one-pane window. There was something illusory in this transplantation of the wealth and honors of a family, a thing by its nature so deeply rooted in the soil; something ghostly in this sense of home-coming so far from home.

From Dunstable I rolled away into a crescendo of similar impressions. There are certainly few things to be compared with these castles, or rather country seats, of the English nobility and gentry; nor anything at all to equal the servility of the population that dwells in their neighbor-

hood. Though I was but driving in a hired chaise, word of my destination seemed to have gone abroad, and the women curtsied and the men louted to me by the wayside. As I came near, I began to appreciate the roots of this widespread respect. The look of my uncle's park wall, even from the outside, had something of a princely character; and when I came in view of the house itself, a sort of madness of vicarious vainglory struck me dumb and kept me staring. It was about the size of the Tuileries. It faced due north; and the last rays of the sun, that was setting like a red-hot shot amidst a tumultuous gathering of snow-clouds, were reflected on the endless rows of windows. A portico of Doric columns adorned the front, and would have done honor to a temple. The servant who received me at the door was civil to a fault—I had almost said, to offense; and the hall to which he admitted me through a pair of glass doors was warmed and already partly lighted by a liberal chimney heaped with the roots of beeches.

"Vicomte Anne de St.-Yves," said I, in answer to the man's question; whereupon he bowed before me lower still, and stepping upon one side introduced me to the truly awful presence of the majordomo. I have seen many dignitaries in my time, and none who quite equaled this eminent being. He was great, he was good, he was sleek, he was obsequious, he had not an "h" in his composition, and with all these qualities he was yet good enough to answer to the unassuming name of Dawson. From him I learned that my uncle was extremely low, a doctor in close attendance, Mr. Romaine expected at any moment, and that my cousin, the Vicomte de St.-Yves, had been sent for the same morning.

"It was a sudden seizure, then?" I asked.

Well, he would scarcely go as far as that. It was a decline, a fading away, sir; but he was certainly took bad the day before, had sent for Mr. Romaine, and the majordomo had taken it on himself a little later to send word to the Viscount. "It seemed to me, my lord," said he, "as if this was a time when all the fambly should be called together."

I approved him with my lips, but not in my heart. Dawson was plainly in the interests of my cousin.

"And when can I expect to see my great-uncle the count?" said I.

In the evening, I was told; in the meantime he would show me to my room, which had been long prepared for me, and I should be expected to dine in about an hour with the doctor, if my lordship had no objections.

My lordship had not the faintest.

"At the same time," I said, "I have had an accident; I have unhappily lost my baggage, and am here in what I stand in. I don't know if the doctor be a formalist, but it is quite impossible I should appear at table as I ought."

He begged me to be under no anxiety. "We have been long expecting you," said he. "All is ready."

Such I found to be the truth. A great room had been prepared for me; through the mullioned windows the last flicker of the winter sunset interchanged with the reverberation of a royal fire; the bed was open, a suit of evening clothes was airing before the blaze, and from the far corner a boy came forward with deprecatory smiles. The dream in which I had been moving seemed to have reached its pitch. I might have quitted this house and room only the night before; it was my own place that I had come to; and for the first time in my life I understood the force of the words home and welcome.

"This will be all as you would want, sir?" said Mr. Dawson. "This 'ere boy, Rowley, we place entirely at your disposition. 'E's not exactly a trained vallet, but Mossho Powl, the viscount's gentleman, 'ave give him the benefick of a few lessons, and it is 'oped that he may give sitisfection. Hanythink that you may require, if you will be so good as to mention the same to Rowley, I will make it my business myself, sir, to see you sitisfied."

So saying, the eminent and already detested Mr. Dawson took his departure, and I was left alone with Rowley. A man who may be said to have wakened to consciousness in the prison of the Abbaye, among those ever graceful and ever tragic figures of the brave and fair, awaiting the hour of the guillotine and denuded of every comfort, I had never known the luxuries or the amenities of my rank in life. To be attended on by servants I had only been accustomed to in inns. My toilet had long been military, to a moment, at the note of a bugle, too often at a ditch-side. And it need not be wondered at if I looked on my new valet with a certain diffidence. But I remembered that if he was my first experience as a valet, I was his first trial of a master. Cheered by which consideration, I demanded my bath in a style of

good assurance. There was a bathroom contiguous; in an incredibly short space of time the hot water was ready; and soon after, arrayed in a shawl dressing-gown, and in a luxury of contentment and comfort, I was reclined in an easy-chair before the mirror, while Rowley, with a mixture of pride and anxiety which I could well understand, laid out his razors.

"Hey, Rowley?" I asked, not quite resigned to go under fire with such an inexperienced commander. "It's all right, is it? You feel pretty sure of your weapons?"

"Yes, my lord," he replied. "It's all right, I assure your lordship."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Rowley, but for the sake of shortness, would you mind not belording me in private?" said I. "It will do very well if you call me Mr. Anne. It is the way of my country, as I daresay you know."

Mr. Rowley looked blank.

"But you're just as much a viscount as Mr. Powl's, are you not?" he said.

"As Mr. Powl's viscount?" said I, laughing. "Oh, keep your mind easy, Mr. Rowley's is every bit as good. Only, you see, as I am of the younger line, I bear my Christian name along with the title. Alain is the *Viscount*; I am the *Viscount Anne*. And in giving me the name of Mr. Anne, I assure you you will be quite regular."

"Yes, Mr. Anne," said the docile youth. "But about the shaving, sir, you need be under no alarm. Mr. Powl says I 'ave excellent dispositions."

"Mr. Powl?" said I. "That doesn't seem to me very like a French name."

"No, sir, indeed, my lord," said he, with a burst of confidence. "No, indeed, Mr. Anne, and it do not surely. I should say now it was more like Mr. Pole."

"And Mr. Powl is the viscount's man?"

"Yes, Mr. Anne," said he. "He 'ave a hard billet, he do. The viscount is a very particular gentleman. I don't think as you'll be, Mr. Anne?" he added, with a confidential smile in the mirror.

He was about sixteen, well set up, with a pleasant, merry, freckled face, and a pair of dancing eyes. There was an air at once deprecatory and insinuating about the rascal that I thought I recognized. There came to me from my own boyhood memories of certain passionate admirations long passed away and the objects of them long ago discredited or dead. I remembered how anxious I had been to serve those fleeting heroes, how readily I told myself I would have died for *them*, how much greater and handsomer than life they had appeared. And looking in the mirror, it seemed to me that I read the face of Rowley, like an echo or a ghost, by the light of my own youth. I have always contended (somewhat against the opinion of my friends) that I am first of all an economist; and the last thing that I would care to throw away is that very valuable piece of property—a boy's hero-worship.

"Why," said I, "you shave like an angel, Mr. Rowley!"

"Thank you, my lord," says he. "Mr. Powl had no fear of me. You may be sure, sir, I should never 'ave had this berth if I 'adn't 'ave been up to Dick. We been expecting of you this month back. My eye! I never see such preparations. Every day the fires has been kep' up, the bed made, and all! As soon as it was known you were coming, sir, I got the appointment; and I've been up and down since then like a Jack-in-the-box. A wheel couldn't sound in the avenue but what I was at the window! I've had a many disappointments; but to-night, as soon as you stepped out of the shay, I knew it was my—it was you. Oh, you had been expected! Why, when I go down to supper, I'll be the 'ero of the servants' 'all: the 'ole of the staff is that curious!"

"Well," said I, "I hope you may be able to give a fair account of me—sober, steady, industrious, good-tempered, and with a first-rate character from my last place?"

He laughed an embarrassed laugh. "Your hair curls beautiful," he said, by way of changing the subject. "The viscount's the boy for curls, though; and the richness of it is, Mr. Powl tells me his don't curl no more than that much twine—by nature. Gettin' old, the viscount is. He '*ave* gone the pace, 'aven't 'e, sir?"

"The fact is," said I, "that I know very little about him. Our family has been much divided, and I have been a soldier from a child."

"A soldier, Mr. Anne, sir?" cried Rowley, with a sudden feverish animation. "Was you ever wounded?"

It is contrary to my principles to discourage admiration for myself; and, slipping back the shoulder of the dressing-gown, I silently exhibited the scar which I had received in Edinburgh Castle. He looked at it with awe.

"Mercy, now! Was that from a Frenchman?" he inquired, not very tactfully.

I could truly say it was.

"French steel!" he observed, with a kind of dread gusto; and though I had every reason to believe that the scissors were of English make, I did not judge it politic to enter into discussion of the point.

"Ah, well!" he continued, "there's where the difference comes in. It's in the training. The other viscount have been horse-racing, and dicing, and carrying on all his life. All right enough, no doubt; but what I do say is, that it don't lead to nothink. Whereas—"

"Whereas Mr. Rowley's?" I put in.

"My viscount?" said he. "Well, sir, I *did* say it; and now that I've seen you, I say it again!"

I could not refrain from smiling at this outburst, and the rascal caught me in the mirror, and smiled to me again.

"I'd say it again, Mr. Anne," he said. "I know which side my bread's buttered. I know when a gen'leman's a gen'leman. Mr. Powl can go to Putney with his one! Beg your pardon, Mr. Anne, for being so familiar," said he, blushing suddenly scarlet. "I was especially warned against it by Mr. Powl."

"Discipline before all," said I. "Follow your front-rank man."

With that we began to turn our attention to the clothes. I was amazed to find them fit so well: not *à la diable*, in the haphazard manner of a soldier's uniform or a ready-made suit; but with nicety, as a trained artist might rejoice to make them for a favorite subject.

"'Tis extraordinary," cried I; "these things fit me perfectly."

"Indeed, Mr. Anne, you two be very much of a shape," said Rowley.

"Who? What two?" said I.

"The viscount," he said.

"What! Have I the man's clothes on me, too?" cried I.

But Rowley hastened to reassure me. On the first word of my coming, the count had put the matter of my wardrobe in the hands of his own and my cousin's tailors; and on the rumor of our resemblance, my clothes had been made to Alain's measure.

"But they were all made for you, express, Mr. Anne. You may be certain the count would never do nothing by 'alf; fires kep' burning; the finest of clothes ordered, I'm sure, and a body-servant being trained a-purpose."

"Well," said I, "it's a good fire, and a good set-out of clothes; and what a valet, Mr. Rowley! And there's one thing to be said for my cousin—I mean for Mr. Powl's viscount—he has a very fair figure."

"Oh, don't you be took in, Mr. Anne," quoth the faithless Rowley; "he has to be hyked into a pair of stays to get them things on!"

"Come, come, Mr. Rowley," said I, "this is telling tales out of school. Do not you be deceived. The greatest men of antiquity, including Cæsar and Hannibal and Pope Joan, may have been very glad, at my time of life or Alain's, to follow his example. 'Tis a misfortune common to all; and really," said I, bowing to myself before the mirror like one who should dance the minuet, "when the result is so successful as this, who would do anything but applaud?"

My toilet concluded, I marched on to fresh surprises. My chamber, my new valet, and my new clothes had been beyond hope: the dinner, the soup, the whole bill of fare was a revelation of the powers there are in man. I had not supposed it lay in the genius of any cook to create, out of common beef and mutton, things so different and dainty. The wine was of a piece, the doctor a most agreeable companion; nor could I help reflecting on the prospect that all this wealth, comfort, and handsome profusion might still very possibly become mine. Here were a change indeed, from the common soldier and the camp-kettle, the prisoner and his prison rations, the fugitive and the horrors of the covered cart!

(To be continued.)

THE TALENTED MISS HOPE.

By John Kendrick Bangs,

Author of "A Houseboat on the Styx," "The Bicyclers," etc.

"I SUPPOSE, Mr. Bouverie," said Jackson, after ordering a fresh box of cigars and a new round of *liqueurs* for his guests, "I suppose you as a publisher have had some more or less curious experiences in your day."

"Yes, several," replied the Briton; "some of them amusing, some of them tragic, and a few of them embarrassing in a sense. The most singular incident I ever had in publishing was in connection with the works of the talented Miss Hope."

"Ah? Yes," said Valentine. "I know her work, and a most extraordinary person she must have been."

"She was," assented Mr. Bouverie. "She took London by storm. Her first book was a novel of very great force. It came to us in the spring of '83. With it came a modestly expressed letter in a dainty feminine hand, asking if we would give it a speedy reading and, if possible, publish it, since it was her first effort and she was anxious to get a start. She informed us that she was entirely dependent upon what she could earn by her pen for a living; had really no settled home and very few friends. The simplicity of the letter interested me. It was unlike other letters I had received from other beginners, but the difference was in form rather than in substance. What she had to say about herself was expressed with great cleverness, and as for the novel, while it was not great, it was far beyond what most writers who lack experience can produce. It was approved unanimously by our readers, and so glowing were their recommendations that I slipped it into my satchel and took it off to my home to read myself. It was absorbingly interesting, and despite the difficulties of reading a story of that length in manuscript, I went through it from beginning to end in one sitting.

"Of course it was published, and the view the reading public took of its merits, as evidenced by its sale, was not in any way different from that which our readers and I had taken. The first, second, and third editions went off like hot cakes, and we were besieged by the literary *causerie* fellows for information as to this new star in the firmament of letters. I wrote to the young woman and asked her for some account of her antecedents, and received within a few days a sketch of her life, which was almost as romantic as the story we had published; it was pathetic and humorous, and through it all ran the same delightful quality that had made her book so fetching. Then people began to try to lionize her. Invitations by the dozen were addressed to her in our care, requesting her to honor literary gatherings with her presence. Others wanted her to dine with them. She was elected to honorary membership in certain women's associations, but, as far as I could gather, never accepted any of them. As time went on I began to think that it would be a good thing if she should accept some of the attentions the world seemed so ready to lavish upon her, and I ventured to write to her to that effect, excusing myself for interfering, on the ground that as her publisher I took a great deal of interest in her career, and thought it due to herself that she should come out of her seclusion as far as she could.

"Her reply was full of gratitude for the interest I had taken in her welfare, but she was firm in her refusal to desert the privacy which she so much loved. She was of an extremely diffident disposition, she said. She was wrapped up in her work, and had no taste for social diversions. She added that she was engaged upon another book, which she expected to send me shortly, and closed by saying that she hoped I would like it as well as I did the first. Several weeks later the second book came to hand. It was no more like the first than a Chinaman is like a Frenchman. It was in an entirely different vein, but every bit as clever as the first. It was in many ways a complete surprise to me. In the first place, it was a man's book, while the first had been more of a woman's book than anything else. She dealt with the fortune of a young scion of nobility in the second, and in such a way as seemed to indicate that she knew all

about the trials and temptations which beset the young men of to-day, a more or less astonishing acquirement in a girl of her tendency to make a recluse of herself. Of course I published the book; and if the first had raised a storm of applause, the second aroused a hurricane of enthusiasm. The magazines began to take notice, and Miss Hope's work was in great demand. She met the demand with a supply that was absolutely marvellous. It made no difference what she undertook, she did it well, and showed a grasp on subjects of the most diverse kinds. Her poetry was especially taking, and her essays were written with a touch which even Lang might envy. All her literary business was, at her request, carried on through our firm, and we had some difficulty in convincing outsiders that our knowledge of the young woman's personality was almost as slight as that of the world.

"When she had written a sufficient number of poems to warrant a booklet of them, I proposed that it be issued, and she readily agreed. She compiled them herself; made certain alterations in them, which showed that she possessed a nice literary instinct; added a few unpublished verses to the lot, and sent them in. As the book was about ready for the press, it occurred to me that a photograph of the author would make a good frontispiece for it. Miss Hope demurred for a while to this. She had never had her photograph taken, she wrote, and was of the opinion that it would add little to the value of the book anyhow. She wished to be judged by her work alone. Her personal appearance had nothing whatever to do with that, and, on the whole, she preferred not to let the public into the secret of how she looked. This struck me as being sensible, and I did not press the point, although I was much disappointed.

"It happened after a while, however, that she was forced to permit an authentic portrait of herself to be published. Some unscrupulous American newspaper syndicate pirated the second book, and, in connection with it, flooded the United States with a wholly fabricated wood-cut of Miss Hope, which would have driven any other creature to suicide. One of these was sent to me by an American friend, and I immediately forwarded it to the fair original, with a jocose note, expressing my regret that she should thus have favored the American public, while denying to her countrymen the coveted privilege of gazing upon her counterfeit presentment. This had the desired effect, and within two weeks I was in possession of a photograph of Miss Hope, with permission to publish it as the frontispiece to a volume of essays which we were making ready. When I saw the photograph I became more interested in Miss Hope than ever, for it was the face of a charming girl of about twenty that gazed back at me from the print. She appeared to be of a blonde type; had deep, soulful eyes, a wealth of hair arranged tastefully over a high, intellectual forehead; a slightly irregular nose, and a mouth which indicated much firmness of character. To me the essays became the least part of the book when it was issued with that face opposite the title page, and my susceptibilities made me think of a possible Mrs. Bouverie who should be a woman of exceptional mold.

"So a year went on. The popularity of the young authoress suffered no diminution; it increased rather, until one day I received a short note from her, stating that she was in London and would be pleased to have me call, fixing the hour and date. No sooner was this received than a reply accepting her invitation was sent, though when I came to address the reply, which task I did not care to entrust to the hands of a clerk, I was somewhat disturbed to discover where the fair visitor was lodged. It was in one of the most populous and busy streets of London, the last place in the world where a jewel of humanity such as I had come to think of her as being should find lodgment.

"'An eccentricity of genius,' I thought, and then busied myself with other things until the hour appointed. I dressed with unusual care, called a hansom, and sought the house. I was received at the door by an aged woman who smiled rather broadly, I thought, when I asked if Miss Hope was in. She said she was, and requested me to go up to the third story front.

"'Wouldn't you better take my card to her first?' I asked.

"'Ho, no, sir,' replied the aged woman. 'My horders was to show you hup as soon as you kyme.'

"So up I went, through two dark halls, along three dark stairways, and tapped gently upon the door of the front room. Instead of the soft, silvery voice I had expected—for I had been thinking so much about Miss Hope of late that I had a well-developed notion in my mind as to her voice, manner, walk, gestures, and so

forth—I heard a gruff, masculine voice cry out, 'Come in; and, having come, close after you the door.'

"For a moment I was staggered. Perhaps I had tapped on the wrong door. The thing to do was to apologize and get out. So I opened the door and saw sitting around a table, playing cards and smoking profusely, a half dozen men I knew well—Gaston of the 'Rambler,' Cholmondeley Phipps of the 'Telegram,' and others—all enormously clever men of decidedly Bohemian instincts.

"'Halloo, Bouverie,' cried Gaston, as I entered. 'Glad to see you. This is an unexpected pleasure.'

"'It certainly is for me,' I answered as well as I could, considering my surprise. 'I had no intention of disturbing you, I am sure. I came here to make a call on —on one of our authors. I believe he has rooms in this house.'

"Phipps laughed in a way I did not fancy very much, and then he said in a way I liked still less, 'He?'

"'I don't understand you,' I said.

"'You said you believed "He" had rooms in this house. Sure it's a he, Bouverie?'

"'Well,' I said slowly, for an idea was beginning to dawn on my mind, 'I wasn't sure of it when I spoke, but—'

"'There are no rooms let in this house, Bouverie,' said Gaston. 'We have it all. This is our cardroom, and you are welcome. In fact, Bouverie, you've paid for most of it.'

"'I?' I queried, a little mystified.

"'Yes,' returned Gaston, 'you and the British public. Those blasted Americans didn't pay for the stuff, did they, Phippsy?'

"'They did not,' said Phipps; 'but they printed our photograph for us.'

"'Well,' I put in, 'this is all very mysterious—unless I have been made the victim of a practical joke.'

"'You have,' said Gaston.

"'And you, gentlemen, then, are—'

"'The talented Miss Hope, at your service, Bouverie,' said Phipps, and then the sextet rose up and salaamed. 'Do you think our photograph looks like us?' they cried.

"And so it was. Those six villains had concocted Miss Hope; had written her books; had started the furor for her work in their own papers, and I was their victim."

"Victim or beneficiary?" asked Jackson.

"A little of both," returned Bouverie. "So much of one that I forgave them for making me a little of the other; but from that time on the talented Miss Hope stopped writing."

THE WHIP HAND.

By Ann Devoore.

SHE was a stunning girl, straight and slim, with a bewildering way of looking at a man. Her eyes were a warm, thick brown, and their lids as white as cream; the deluding sort of eyes and eyelids that say nothing and set you to imagining everything. When I had talked to her for five minutes and she had regarded me with her soft stare for most of that time, my heart went to thumping at my ribs. I must confess I was so much surprised that I clapped my hand to my side and laughed out.

Miss Morris laughed too, and asked, "What is the matter?"

Of course I could not tell her then, but when I had known her for a month, I asked her if she remembered our first meeting.

"Yes," she said; "what made you start?"

I took her hand and said, "I fell in love with you that minute, dear."

I am a Westerner, and rough and sudden in my ways, I suppose; for she seemed wholly startled, slipped her hand out of mine, and told me never to speak so again.

"Why not?" I asked. "You do not love me, Kitty?"

"No," she said, but her eyes lingered in mine.

"And you will not marry me?"

She refused steadily.

"And I am never again to tell you that I love you?"

"Never," she said.

"Kitty, dear," said I gently, "you do love me, and you are going to marry me, and I mean to propose to you every time I meet you."

I went then, for she was rather angry. She said something cutting about my Western ways and shooting a man on sight. But I kept my word, and at dances and dinners, wherever we met, in spite of her disdain, I always made my speech, "Will you marry me, dear?" After awhile, when she caught sight of me across a room the color would spring to her cheeks, and though I knew it was half embarrassment I could swear the other half was pleasure. She had an obstinate way of tilting her chin when she saw me approach that was very pretty and made me only the more determined. Besides, she did not absolutely cut me, as she might have done. She would not see me when I called, and if I asked for a dance it was always engaged. But when I said firmly, "This is my dance, Miss Morris," she would not contradict me.

Late one afternoon at the beginning of Lent, when I had not seen her for several days, I overtook her walking home from church, and joined her. She greeted me frigidly, held her prayer-book tight and her head high. I watched the red steal up her cheeks.

"Miss Morris," I said. She did not answer. Ahead of us, where the church spires pierced the cold northern sky, a small star glittered. The faces of the people we met reflected the light of the sunset behind us. I began again. "When you pray," said I, and I looked at her prayer-book, "do you never ask to be made more merciful?"

She turned her soft eyes to me. "Please don't, Mr. Standish," she pleaded. "I cannot bear to have you use words that seem to me sacred to carry on this farce."

"It is anything but a farce," said I. "Call it a tragedy."

"Did any man in earnest ever propose to a girl eleven times in six weeks?" She asked this question scornfully.

"Miss Morris," said I, "it is not my fault that it has been done so often. If you had accepted me at the first—but you refused me, and what else could I do? Am I a fool to try again and again to win what is the best and most beautiful thing I ever set eyes on? How can I stop asking you to marry me until you consent? You must marry me, dear. I am sure it is the only chance of happiness for either of us."

"There," she said, with an angry laugh, "twelve times! Don't you see, Mr. Standish, that by acting so you make every word you say seem a foolish joke?"

"It is you," I told her, "who can make them all a glad reality."

"Oh!" she cried, "and you pretend it is my fault! Well, it shall never happen again—never, never! You shall not humiliate yourself and me." Her color deepened, and she drew herself up, slender and proud. "Mr. Standish," she said, "I promise you that if ever again I give you an opportunity of speaking so to me, I shall answer whatever you wish."

We reached her home then, and she stopped. So great was my surprise that I merely bowed and let her ascend the steps in silence.

Life went sadly after that. Try as I would I could not speak to her. When we passed in the street she was never alone, and she had taken to looking on one side of me with a sweet, dark-eyed vacancy. There were few entertainments now, and though I haunted her favorite church at the afternoon services she did not come. She seemed to avoid going to the houses of those friends where she would be likely to meet me. Only once was I able to look at her for more than a passing second. I had taken a ticket for an afternoon concert in the hope of seeing her, and I chanced to sit where I could watch her profile whenever she turned to speak to her companion. She looked a trifle pale and sad. "Perhaps," thought I, "she regrets that her efforts are so successful." That thought, however, was knocked out of me when we reached the street, by the smiling unrecognition which greeted my eager bow.

Six weeks came and went, but never an opportunity to make her fulfil her promise, and then she went to Boston for a visit, and stayed away a month. I grew haggard. People told me I must take a run abroad in the summer. "Not till I'm married," said I, and gritted my teeth. I believe that at this time my love for Kitty Morris was almost forgotten in my set determination to have my own way.

There came a May morning, fresh and balmy. The horse-chestnuts spread out their green fans, the maples clapped their small palms to the breeze, and the tulips in the trim flower-beds looked primly gaudy. I was walking through Madison Square on my way to business, and hope was stirring in my heart. I suppose it was the general hilarity of nature that had taken hold of me. I did not feel much surprised when a hansom went by and I saw Kitty Morris inside. It was what the weather had led me to expect. I took joyfully to my heels and followed. Eastward we went through Twenty-fourth Street and down Second Avenue, and here, on this quiet, old-fashioned thoroughfare, the hansom stopped

before an ancient mansion. Kitty had alighted and been engulfed by the interior darkness before I could reach her, and though I knew that her great-aunt lived within, I remained gazing at the hansom cab.

Then an idea entered my mind, an idea for which the mad May season was alone accountable. When Miss Morris re-entered the hansom cab it was *I* who received the order to drive home; it was I who cracked the long whip and drove recklessly; it was I who feasted my sight on the top of a broad-brimmed hat, a loop of dark hair, and the tip of a small and haughty nose. I had the trap-door in the top of the cab open all the way.

Trusting in the disguise of the former cabby's hat, which I had hired, I made straight for the Park, and when we were rolling smoothly between green lawns, with no one of any account in sight, I bent low and whispered:

"Kitty, dear, will you marry me?"

She started violently and upturned a white face. I don't know what she thought seeing my face above her there, but her eyes filled slowly with tears, and she whispered, "Dick!"

"Kitty," I said, "don't cry, or I shall come down from the roof, and here is Mrs. Van Dam's brougham. I would not have frightened you for anything in the world." I slowed the horse to a walk, so that I could give my whole attention to the trap-door.

"I have come to claim your promise," I called down to her. "Tell me, dearest, that you are glad to see me."

Her pride seemed to be melting before my eyes. Her tears overflowed, and she held her hands up before her face, but I caught a quavering voice, "I am glad, Dick—so, so glad!"

I dropped the reins and pressed closer to the little door. "Darling Kitty, if you cry you'll break my heart," I called. "Be a brave girl. Oh, Kitty, couldn't you stretch your hand up and let me touch it once?"

"I—I can't reach," she sobbed.

"Then you do love me?" I asked.

She wiped her eyes. "Dick," she said, "couldn't you come down?"

I believe the horse was arrested that afternoon for walking on the grass and eating young trees, but it pleases me to think that while Kitty and I wandered through the sweet paths and blossoming alleys, the poor beast was tasting green food and resting his tired bones.

There in the early solitude, in the genial sunshine and the unsteady shadows, Kitty confessed to me that she had gone to Boston for fear of weakening in her resolution to avoid me.

"Oh, Dick," she said, "I thought you would never come and take me in spite of myself."

"Kitty," said I, "would you have wrecked our whole lives from pride and self-will? Would you have let me lose you?"

She turned away her head and blushed. "Dick," she faltered, "this afternoon you will receive an invitation to dine with my aunt, and I—I am to be there, Dick."

THE SHADOW OF THE MOSQUE.

By Albert Bigelow Paine.

I trod the path by which the Saviour went
Across the Olive Mount to Bethany.
Before me—down the flinty, foot-worn way—
My shadow lengthened, for the day was spent.
Gethsemane below the hill's descent
Was hallowed by the glow of dying day,
While fields of poppied wheat beyond it lay,
Fair symbols of the final sacrament.

And then remembering, I turned to see
The sun go down behind Jerusalem;
And Omar's mosque aglint with tinsel gem
Arose between the day's decline and me.
And as I marked that Moslem diadem,
Its shadow crept across Gethsemane.